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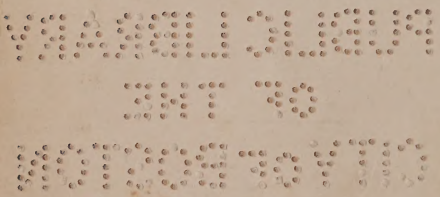

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Preface

PREFACE.

THE following Biographical Sketches, with a few exceptions, are from the pens of English and American writers. That of Beatrice Cenci is a translation from the manuscript of an unknown Italian author; those of Charlotte Corday and Joan of Arc are from Lamartine, abbreviated and otherwise modified; the former from his History of the Girondists, the latter from his Memoirs of Celebrated Characters.

The compiler claims for himself no credit in the work, except for bringing into one group some of the most extraordinary females of different ages and nations, whose lives occupy a sort of middle ground between romance and history. It has been his aim in the present volume, so far as the material within his reach enabled him, to present to the reader individual characters, which although strongly resembling are vividly in contrast with each other.

BEATRICE CENCI and CHARLOTTE CORDAY:—one the avenger in blood of her own wrongs,—the other of her country's. Both violators of the laws of God and

man, yet under such circumstances that man compassionates, and trusts and hopes that God forgives. JOANNA SOUTHCOTT and JEMIMA WILKINSON:—the self-deluded enthusiasts, who, within the century just passed, in widely different spheres,—the one in the old world, the other in the new,—conceived and brought forth the idea of a new religious faith, the last disciples of which have but just now, as it were, followed their respective teachers to the world of spirits. The URSINUS and MADAME GOTTFRIED:—both mysteries and miracles of crime in their day,—both saintly hypocrites,—one even to the last,—the history of whose lives would be deemed apochryphal, were it not for the occurrence of similar crimes, on a far less extensive scale, however, in our own. The CLAIRON and the DUCHESS OF ST. ALBANS:—the one ruling the Parisian masses with a sovereignty inferior only to their hereditary monarch,—the other, cradled in poverty and ignominy, dying the possessor of millions, and with the ducal coronet on her brow. LENORMAND—ANGELICA,—poor Angelica!—the PRINCESS CARABOO:—each with her retinue of monarchs and statesmen, scholars and artists, lords and ladies,—the priestess,—the victim,—the scoffer,—at the shrine of Fortune. JOAN THE PONTIFF and JOAN THE WARRIOR:—the one a myth,—perhaps,—but by the lapse of time and the labors of the learned become a reality;—the other a reality, but so enveloped with the golden-hued clouds of romance as to almost seem a myth.

A relish for that form of biographical literature which is usually denominated *eccentric*, led to the compilation of this volume; a belief that the perusal of it might gratify a similar taste in others, has led to its publication. Should that belief prove to have been well founded, a second series of similar character may be expected.

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BEATRICE CENCI.

BEATRICE CENCI;

THE PARRICIDE.

On the wall of a small room, in one of the most magnificent of Rome's palaces, hangs one of the most perfect productions of Guido's pencil; a picture simple and unattractive in its drapery, color, and accessories, but with such a wild sorrow in the eyes, such feminine sweetness in the mouth, and such an expression of hopeless misery and despair, that the spectator's gaze is riveted for the time being, and the remembrance of that lovely face lingers long in the mind with a powerful and harrowing interest. It is the portrait of Beatrice Cenci.

Enough is known of the history of the beautiful and ill-fated Beatrice to create an earnest desire for further information respecting her. The search throughout the public libraries of Rome for any authentic account of her life is unavailing, for the publication of her history is prohibited by the pontifical authorities; and, although the outline of it is universally known, no satisfactorily authentic particulars, it is believed, have ever been published. In one of the magnificent private libraries which enrich that city of literary treasures, however, a manuscript was not long ago discovered, of which the following is a free translation. It purports to have been written by her confessor, shortly after her execution, and bears intrinsic and satisfactory marks of authenticity. In the translation of the manuscript, the original has not been verbally adhered

to, but, while the endeavor of the translator has been so to modify the style as to adapt it to the taste of the English reader, he has carefully preserved the details of the narrative.

The chief of the Treasury of Rome, under Pius V., was a certain Monsignor Cenci, who, during a long period of office, amassed enormous wealth. At his death he left the greater part of this to his son Francesco, who had, some time previously, married a lady of large property. She died after giving birth to her seventh child, and Cenci, in a very short time, formed another alliance with a noble Roman lady. This marriage was not productive of much happiness. Cenci was a man of violent temper and ungovernable passions, who never allowed any obstacle to stand between him and the gratification either of his pleasures or his revenge. Soon after his second marriage, he gave himself up to every species of self-indulgence and to the grossest vices, heedless alike of punishment and admonition, although three times obliged to purchase from the Pope immunity for his crimes by immense sacrifices of his fortune. With no religious principles to check him, and no stings of conscience to warn him, he recklessly pursued his career of debauchery and crime, until his own destruction ensued, speedily followed by the almost total annihilation of his family and name.

In his conduct to the members of his own family he was most tyrannical, treating them, even from infancy, with unparalleled cruelty. He sent three of his sons, Giacomo, Cristofero, and Rocco, to Salamanca, assigning as the cause of this act that he wished them to pursue their studies in greater retirement than they could in Rome; but when once there, he positively refused to allow them any supplies of money, or to provide for them the means

of procuring either food or clothing. They returned in despair to Rome, but soon found that misery and starvation at Salamanca were more endurable than the daily persecutions of their own home. Here they were allowed only the smallest portion of food that would sustain life, and the scantiest clothing that would cover their bodies.

Unable to endure this miserable existence, they sent petitions to Clement VIII., the reigning Pope, urging the hardship of their case, the unnatural and undeserved cruelty of their father, and their despair of any amendment in their condition without his intervention. Their entreaties were disregarded; the Pope, perhaps, from his own position as father of his people, was a rigid advocate for upholding the rights and authority of a parent; he refused to listen to their petition, and dismissed them abruptly from his presence as rebels against that power to which all children should unhesitatingly submit.

Another petition from the same family reached Clement not long after the rejection of the former one, and to this he listened more favorably. It was from the eldest of Count Cenci's daughters. She had long suffered equally with the rest of his children from his barbarous treatment, and, feeling that any life was preferable to that she led in her father's house, she addressed a letter to the pope, in which she stated that her father was in the continual habit of beating her, shutting her up in cold, damp cells, with scarcely any food or clothing, and, what was still more repulsive and distressing to her as a woman, that he compelled her, with his other children and his wife, to live in the same house and associate with his mistresses and vile companions. She proceeded to state that she cared not what became of her if she could only escape from this terrible life, and earnestly besought his Holiness either to place her in some convent, or to give her in marriage to

any one whom he should select. The poor girl's prayer was heard; a husband, in the person of Signor Carlo Gabrielli, a gentleman from Gubbio, was chosen for her, and a sum of one thousand crowns allotted for her dower. Francesco knew that there was no course left for him but to submit without a murmur to the decree of the pope; he was determined, however, that, since one daughter had thus escaped from his tyranny, he would only treat the remaining one with the greater severity. Beatrice, the heroine of our story, was immediately separated from the rest of the family, and confined in a solitary apartment in a remote part of the palace. Francesco at first brought her all her meals with his own hand, frequently leaving her food unchanged for days, and whenever he heard the slightest murmur of complaint, severely punishing her with stripes and blows.

It was about this period that an event occurred which would have softened any heart less obdurate than that of Francesco Cenci. Cristofero and Rocco, two of his sons whom he had before sent to Salamanca, were assassinated in the neighborhood of Rome, from what cause, or at whose instigation, was never discovered. When the news of this sad occurrence reached the palace, Count Cenci expressed the utmost joy and gratitude to God for the removal of such a burthen, declared that their funeral should be conducted in the meanest possible way, that no torchbearer should light them to their last home, no money from his coffers purchase masses for the repose of their souls; adding, further, that he himself could never enjoy any true peace or rest until he knew that his wife, and every child he had, were rotting in their graves; then, he declared, his joy would indeed surpass all bounds, and that he would make a bonfire of his palace and all he possessed in honor of the blessed event.

Amidst all his fiendish exultation he never relaxed his harsh treatment of Beatrice, but increased it daily; to add to the horror of the poor girl's existence, he conceived a criminal passion for her, persecuting her at all hours and all seasons, terrifying her at one time with threats and blows, at another insulting her with disgusting protestations.

Beatrice bore all wonderfully for a long time; but her health and strength began at last to give way, and she feared that her mind was failing with her body. She used every effort to divert her father from his horrible designs; but threats of heaven's vengeance, tears, and prayers, were alike unheeded by him. She tried, too, the same plan which had succeeded in her sister's case; and, with much difficulty, she found an opportunity and materials to write secretly a memorial to the pope, stating the immediate cause of her suffering, and praying for help. This she gave to a messenger whom she thought she could trust; she waited sadly and anxiously for an answer or some sign of assistance, but none ever came. Long afterwards, when this petition was searched for in the Record Office, where such papers were preserved, it could not be found; and it is supposed that it was intercepted by Cenci himself, and never reached the hands of Clement. Beatrice's trials increased from the day she sent it, until she was reduced to such a state of madness and desperation that she determined to free herself by any possible means.

To her stepmother, who had been a fellow-sufferer in many of the trials and cruelties Cenci imposed on his family, Beatrice poured out her bursting heart; her face buried in her mother's bosom, her voice almost inarticulate with choking sobs, she related the last monstrous designs of her cruel father; how she had tried to make him forego his fearful purpose, but that all her efforts had been use-

less; she declared that there were limits even to the duty that a child owes to its parent, and that there now remained but one thing to be done, to slay that father who had endeavored not only to destroy her body, but eternally ruin her soul. Lucrezia, whose love for her husband had been long alienated by neglect and ill-treatment, at once consented to the proposal of Beatrice, reminding her, however, that they alone could never accomplish such a deed; that their object was not revenge for the past, but self-preservation for the future; and concluded by urging her to call into their counsel a certain Monsignor Guerra.

She could hardly have selected a more suitable coadjutor than Signor Guerra. He was an intimate and long-attached friend of the Cenci family, one who had known Beatrice and her brothers from their childhood; handsome in person, and accomplished in his manners, he had early attached himself to Beatrice, and, in the absence of Francesco Cenci, had always contrived to be with her, and devote himself to her as much as possible. He had long watched Cenci's conduct, and cordially hated and despised him for his cruelty. Signor Guerra readily promised his help and counsel, and undertook to open the matter to Giacomo, the eldest son, whose sanction and aid they were most anxious to secure. There was little difficulty in inducing Giacomo to join them, as Cenci had treated him with greater harshness, if possible, than his other sons, partly because he was his first-born, but more because he had married, and had thus removed from his father's palace, and from his more ready vengeance and punishment. After devising various plans, none seemed to them so feasible as to employ some of the hired assassins, who were so readily procured in Rome and its neighborhood.

Francesco had already informed his family that he

meant to retire with them to a country-house of the Colonnas, on the confines of the Neapolitan territories, called Rocca di Petrella, and had appointed a day for their journey. Guerra and Giacomo, on hearing this, immediately selected two men on whom they believed they could rely to accomplish Cenci's murder. One was a vassal of Cenci's, called Martino, who was strongly attached to the younger branches of the family, and who undertook the enterprise principally from his love to them; the other, Olimpio, a retainer of the Colonnas, who had received some injury or affront from Count Cenci, and who was eager to gratify his own revenge, as well as earn the promised reward. These men, invested with full powers from the family, formed a band of ten or twelve from among their comrades, and at once set out for the neighborhood of Petrella, intending to wait in a wood through which the road passed. Their project was to attack the Cenci family when they were journeying through this lonely spot, which they would do towards nightfall, take them all, and carry Cenci himself off to the mountains. As soon as they had secured him, they proposed to release the rest of the family, order them to return at once to Rome, and bring back, to an appointed place, a large sum of money as a ransom for the Count, whose life was to be forfeited if the money was not paid by a certain day. They agreed that if this could be accomplished, it would most effectually attain their object; there would remain then nothing for the family to do but to delay a little at Rome, arrive at the place of ransom a day too late, and find only the dead body of Francesco. Nothing seemed more feasible than this plan, or more likely to leave the authors of the plot undiscovered; but fate was against it. Unforeseen business obliged Cenci to defer his journey for some time, and, the banditti, after waiting several days in

vain, fearing that the plot was discovered, and consulting their own safety, departed to some more profitable and less dangerous field of action.

This plan having failed, Beatrice, Lucrezia and Guerra, formed another. They agreed to defer the destruction of Cenci until they reached Petrella, where they hoped it could be accomplished more securely than in Rome. Guerra succeeded once more in finding Martino and Olimpio, and arranged with them that as soon as the family was settled at Petrella, they should repair thither; that Beatrice should admit them within the castle, and that they should then put the Count to death in whatever manner they best could. Their reward was to be a thousand crowns, one third to be paid to them in Rome by Signor Guerra, one third by Beatrice at Petrella, and the remaining portion to be delivered to them when the deed was accomplished. They fixed, at first, upon the festival of the Nativity of the Virgin as the most suitable day to attempt the murder; but Beatrice consented to postpone it till the following day, at the earnest solicitations of her mother, who was very superstitious, and would not consent to sanction the desecration of a day set apart for religious duties, by the commission of a murder, and thus burthen her soul with a double crime.

Accordingly, on the following day, the 9th of September, A. D. 1598, Martino and Olimpio were privately introduced into the castle, and, about midnight, were conducted by Beatrice and Lucrezia to the bedroom of Francesco, who slept soundly, opium having been administered to him in his food. Beatrice placed a light on the table, and, pointing out to the assassins the bed on which her father lay, retired with her mother into the adjoining apartment. Thither they were almost immediately followed by the two men, who declared that they dared not

proceed further; that it would be a shame for two men to murder a sleeping, and, therefore, helpless, old man; and that they shrank with horror from committing so shocking a crime.

Beatrice, hearing this, burst forth in indignant reproaches: "Are you," she exclaimed, "the men whose lives are passed in rapine and murder? have you not the courage to attack an old man who lies asleep and powerless? were he awake you would fly from him in terror. Is this the way in which you earn your reward? — is it thus you fulfil the solemn compact to which you have pledged yourselves? But come, — since your dastardly cowardice forces me, I will take your place; I, weak, and a woman though I be, will do the deed which you, who boast yourselves men, shrink from; away! I will slay my father!"

The assassins hesitated for a moment, but, feeling the cutting reproach conveyed both in her words and manner, resolved to drown all compunction, and hurried back to the bedchamber. Lucrezia and Beatrice held the lamp in the adjoining room, so that the men could see where Cenci lay without introducing light enough to disturb his slumbers. Martino then placed a large nail, or iron bolt, upon the right eye of their victim, which Olimpio, with one blow of a hammer, drove straight into the brain. The deed being accomplished, Beatrice gave to Martino and Olimpio a heavy purse of gold, to be divided between them, and to Martino himself a valuable cloak, trimmed with gold lace, and then dismissed them.

The mother and daughter, being now left alone, went into Francesco's room, drew forth the nail from his head, and, wrapping the dead body carefully in a sheet, carried it to a small pavilion built at the end of a terrace-walk which overlooked an orchard. From this height they cast it

down on an old, gnarled elder-tree, in order that when the body should be found it might appear that whilst walking on the terrace his foot had slipped, and that he had fallen head-foremost on one of the short stunted branches of the tree, which, piercing through his eye to the brain, had caused his death. The body was found the next morning. When the discovery was made known to Lucrezia and Beatrice, they feigned astonishment at the event, rushed through the house tearing their hair, uttering cries and lamentations, and bewailing, with many tears, Cenci's untimely death. In a day or two the funeral took place, and, immediately after it, the family returned to Rome, feeling that they had at length accomplished what they had so long and ardently desired, and that they had removed their tyrant, without, as it seemed to them, having in any way compromised their own safety.

As soon as the death of Count Cenci was announced at Naples, the sudden manner in which it had taken place gave rise to strong suspicions that he had been murdered. The Neapolitan government immediately despatched certain officers to Petrella, with orders to have the body exhumed and carefully examined; and strict inquiries were instituted in the neighborhood and castle as to the cause of the Count's unexpected death.

The result of this investigation was that all the inhabitants of Petrella were placed under arrest, bound, and sent to Naples, where they underwent a most strict examination. The only suspicious circumstance which could be elicited, was from the confession made by the washerwoman to whom Beatrice had imprudently given the sheet in which the dead body was carried, assigning some trivial reason for its being stained with blood. This woman at once declared that, the morning after the murder, she had washed the sheet for the daughter of Count Cenci; that it

had been saturated with blood, and that the reason assigned for the stains upon it was an insufficient and impossible one. The people of Petrella were now released, and a courier despatched to the court of Rome with full information of the state of Count Cenci's body when exhumed, the testimony of the washerwoman, and the very strong suspicions which had been aroused that the Count's own family were implicated in the apparent murder. Some months passed over whilst these grave charges were being privately investigated, and during this time the youngest of Cenci's sons died, so that there now only remained Giacomo and Bernardo.

Through the private information of a friend, Monsignor Guerra became acquainted with all that was going on: in consequence of which, he began to adopt measures to secure his own safety. He had great fears that Olimpio and Martino might fall into the hands of the police, be put to the torture, and betray all who had been concerned in the murder. Guerra thought the only sure way to silence them was to have them assassinated, for which purpose he hired ruffians, who lay long in wait for them, but succeeded only in despatching Olimpio. Martino was, a few days afterwards, taken prisoner by the Neapolitan soldiers, and to them he confessed everything relating to the Cenci's death. Information of this important evidence was at once forwarded to Rome, on the receipt of which Giacomo and Bernardo were confined in the prison of Corte Savella, and Lucrezia and Beatrice detained in the Cenci palace, guarded by a strong force of police, to await the arrival of Martino, who had set out from Naples to give his testimony against them in person. On his arrival he was at once conducted to Corte Savella, to be confronted with the prisoners, who were all collected there to meet him. When he saw the firmness with which all, but especially

Beatrice, denied any knowledge of, or participation in, the murder, and heard her declare that she had never before seen the embroidered cloak which she had given to Martino, and which was found on him, he was so struck and awed by her presence of mind and indignant eloquence, that he now strenuously recanted all that he had confessed to the soldiers, and determined rather to die on the rack than betray the Cenci family further. The judge, finding that the case against them was incomplete, yet reluctant to have recourse to the torture until all other means had failed, remanded the prisoners, and sent them all to the castle of St. Angelo, where they remained for some months.

During this time, one of the brigands employed by Guerra was seized by the soldiers and executed; but, previous to his death, he confessed his crimes, and amongst them the murder of Olimpio, the cause of it, and the name of the person by whom he had been hired. This brought proof of participation in the murder home to Signor Guerra, who had long been suspected, but against whom they had hitherto been unable to bring any evidence.

The moment Guerra heard of the seizure of the brigand, he determined to attempt his escape at all hazards, rather than await the chances of a trial. This was no easy matter, as his great personal beauty, as well as his station in society, had made his face familiar to every one in Rome. He saw that his only chance of eluding the officers of justice was to assume some disguise. Walking in a lonely and uninhabited part of Rome, he met a charcoal-seller, whom he persuaded, by a large bribe, to give him his tattered clothes, and to purchase for him two mules laden with charcoal. Guerra, having now changed his dress, shaved off his beard, and blackened his face and hands, mounted one of the mules; leading the other after him by a rope, he assumed the awkward gait of a peasant,

and with his mouth stuffed with bread, and his hands filled with onions, he rode through the streets, selling his charcoal to the poor people, at the very time that the police had received orders for his arrest, and were making diligent inquiries for him. Having disposed of all his charcoal, he rode through one of the gates of Rome, and, though he met in the Campagna the police who were in search of him, yet he fortunately escaped without attracting their observation.

The flight of Signor Guerra, coupled with the confessions of Olimpio's murderer, tended so much to strengthen the suspicions against the Cencis, that the judge resolved to put them all to the torture, in the hope of compelling them to confess their guilt. For this purpose, they were transferred from the castle of St. Angelo to Corte Savella. The courage and fortitude of Giacomo and Bernardo soon failed, and they at once confessed; Lucrezia, who was old and weakened by intense suffering and long imprisonment, soon followed their example. Beatrice alone remained firm. Strong in body as in mind, she could not be induced, either by persuasion, threats, or even the torture itself, to acknowledge her guilt. She resolutely protested her innocence, and, with much ability and self-possession, cross-examined the witnesses who appeared against her. The simple courage of Beatrice, and the conflicting testimony of the witnesses, puzzled and confused the crown prosecutor.

Monsignor Ulysses Moscata feeling himself totally unable to come to any decision, referred all the papers to the Pope himself. Clement diligently read through the minutes of the evidence, and studied the trial from the commencement. Suspecting that the unwillingness of Moscata to believe Beatrice guilty might have been increased by her extreme beauty, he ordered that the con-

ducting of the prosecution should be removed from his hands; that the tortures of Beatrice should be greatly increased; and that, when bound with the cord, she should be brought suddenly into the presence of her mother and brothers.

The moment Beatrice appeared before her family, they unanimously exclaimed that any further denial was useless, that the crime was proved beyond a doubt, and that nothing now remained but to supplicate forgiveness of their sins from God, and employ the short time allowed them in preparing for another world.

"What!" exclaimed Beatrice, "will you brand our once noble house with an evil name? — will you, by your own weakness and cowardice, doom yourselves to the scaffold, like common criminals? You are wrong; but, since you have willed it, be it even so!" Then, turning to her guards, she said, "Unbind me, and let the accusation be read over to me again, that I may confess what I have done, and deny whatever I may be falsely accused of."

Beatrice having been now convicted from her own mouth, together with Lucrezia and her brothers, they were released from the torture, and, as they had not seen each other for five months, were permitted to spend the remainder of the day together. On the following day, Giacomo and Bernardo were removed to the prison of Tordinona, Lucrezia and Beatrice remaining at Corte Savella.

No further proofs of guilt being now necessary, the Pope proceeded to pass sentence upon them; and awarded as their punishment that they should be dragged through the streets, tied to the tails of horses, until life should be extinct. As soon as this decree was made known, almost all the cardinals and princes of Rome met together, and

signed a petition, which they forwarded to the Pope, praying him not to put in execution so severe a sentence, but to mitigate the punishment. The answer, however, of Clement was unpropitious: "I am here," he said, "not to extend mercy, but to uphold justice. Why should I have pity on those who showed none to their old father, when they inhumanly murdered him?"

At length, however, wearied by the reiterated prayers of the noblest and most powerful families in Rome, Clement granted the Cencis a reprieve of twenty-five days, in order that they might bring forward any circumstances which might palliate their crime, and induce him to alter his sentence to a milder punishment.

During this time, many of the principal advocates of Rome occupied themselves in collecting proofs of the cruel conduct of Francesco to his wretched family, which, having occasioned their crime, might, in some degree, excuse their guilt. At the termination of the allotted time, they appeared before the Pope. Signor Niccolo degli Angeli opened the pleadings; but, before he had proceeded far, the Pope, interrupting him, exclaimed,

"Are there, then, to be found in Rome, not only those who voluntarily destroy their own father by the cowardly blow of the assassin, but those, too, who devote their time and talents to pervert justice, and to ward off punishment from the guilty? I could not have believed that such things could be."

At these words all the advocates sat down in terror, except Farinaccio, who alone remained firm.

"Most holy father," he said, "we are here assembled, not to defend murder, but to save the innocent; and if it should please your Holiness to hear us yet a little further, you will then understand what is our object."

The pope having given his consent that the defence

should proceed, Farinaccio resumed his speech, which lasted for four hours, during all which time Clement listened attentively, made notes of the most important evidence, and, when Farinaccio had ended, took away all the papers connected with the cause, and, with the assistance of Cardinal Marcello, passed the whole night in studying them. The next morning, the pope gave some hope that at least the two brothers might escape the threatened punishment. He said that, in minutely examining the case, he had been led to balance the terrible wrongs and provocation the family had received from their father against the crime which they had committed. Unfortunately, tidings reached Rome, a few days afterwards, that the Signora Castanza Santa Croce, a lady, sixty years of age, had been murdered by her son, Paolo, because she would not promise to name him in her will as heir to all her property. The assassin immediately made his escape. This dreadful outrage inflamed Clement's mind so much, that he at once abandoned all idea of mercy towards the Cencis, and determined to inflict upon them instant punishment, as an example to all parricides. He immediately sent for Monsignor Ferrante Taverna, governor of Rome, told him that he had given up all idea of mitigating the punishment of the Cencis, that he now delivered them into his hands, and held him accountable for their immediate execution. The governor, without a moment's delay, called an assembly of the congregation, and, assisted by all the criminal judges, he passed sentence of death on all the members of the house of Cenci, directing that their execution should take place in public, on the bridge of St. Angelo, on Saturday, September 11th, A.D. 1599. As soon as the sentence was made known, the nobles of Rome used all their influence with the pope to induce him to allow Beatrice and Lucrezia to be executed

in private, and to pardon Bernardo, on account of his youth, (he being at the time only fifteen years old,) and the impossibility of his being a party to the crime. Amongst the most active in this endeavor, were Cardinal Sforza and Farinaccio, the lawyer. The pope was inexorable, insisting that all the executions should take place in public, and with difficulty yielding to the entreaties of Farinaccio, (whose influence over him was great,) to remit the punishment of Bernardo.

About twelve o'clock on the night before the execution, the *Confortatori* were sent to the prisons of Corte Savella and Tordinona, to announce to the captives their doom. On entering the cell of Beatrice, they found her lying, fast asleep, upon her miserable bed; a smile played around her lips, and so sweet and peaceful was her aspect, that one might have thought her dreaming of the bright and happy hours of youth and innocence, when hope had pictured to her mind long years of coming happiness with him she loved. Alas! the heavy steps of the *Confortatori* sounded in her ears, and she was too soon awakened to the reality of her fate. The priest approached her bed, and in a solemn voice exclaimed,

"Arise, unhappy woman! thy hours are numbered. Let thy last earthly confession be made, and with a penitent heart, prepare to answer for thy crimes before that God to whom our inmost thoughts, and most secret actions, are open as the day."

Beatrice started up in her bed, terrified at these awful and solemn words, and, with a piercing shriek, cried out,

"My God! my God! must I then die, so young, so unprepared? must I perish thus ignominiously?"

Her excitement and want of self-command were but momentary; she immediately became calm, and proceeded with Lucrezia to the chapel, where they fell on their

knees, and passed much time absorbed in prayer. Beatrice requested, as a favor, that a lawyer might be allowed to attend her, that she might make a disposition of her property; and she sent a petition to the pope that he would not permit the validity of her will to be disputed. To this the pope at once sent a favorable answer, and a lawyer being in attendance, he drew up her last testament. She bequeathed a large sum of money to the Compagnia dei Confortatori, requesting that they would offer up six hundred masses for the benefit of her soul, one half to be said before, the remainder after her interment. To Madame Bastiana, who had attended her during her imprisonment, she left a considerable sum, and smaller legacies to Andrea, Ludovico, Ascanio, and Carlo, guards of the prison, who had shown her much consideration and kindness. She bequeathed, also, a small sum to Costanza, who had waited on Lucrezia, and concluded by requesting that she might be buried in the church of St. Pietro, in Montorio; then, having signed her will, it was witnessed by Marco Antonio Cavallo, Orazio Onfalda, Antonio Coppoli, and Ruggiero Raggi, a member of the *Confortatori*, Giovanni Battista Manni, the sacristan of the chapel, Santi Varinini, the chaplain, and Pierino, his servant. The Signora Lucrezia, following the example of her daughter, made some additions to a will which had been drawn up several years previously, and requested to be buried in the church of St. Gregorio. Giacomo and Bernardo also made a final disposition of their property, adding that they were ready to die with Christian firmness and resignation; that they thoroughly repented having been parties to so heinous a crime; and that they as freely forgave all those who had ever injured them, as they humbly hoped that God, through Christ, would pardon them. Beatrice and Lucrezia at Corte Savella, and

Giacomo and Bernardo, at Tordinona, passed almost the whole of the night on their knees before the altar, offering up prayers, and singing psalms. At eight o'clock, they made their last confession to the priest, heard mass, and received the sacrament.

The hour having arrived that had been appointed for the execution, Beatrice warned her step-mother that their lives were drawing to a close, and solemnly exhorted her to put her whole trust in God, and meet her fate with courage and firmness. In the meantime, the Signor Tranquillo, subfiscal of Rome, arrived at the prison of Tordinona, to announce to Bernardo that his Holiness, the Pope, had been graciously pleased to grant him his pardon; adding, at the same time, that, although his life was spared, he must join the procession with the rest of his family, and remain seated upon the scaffold until they should all, one after the other, be beheaded. During the reading of the pardon, there were present Don Giovanni Aldobrandini, Messer Aurelio de' Migliori, M. Camillo Morelli, of the company of the *Confortatori*, Messer Francesco Vai, Migliore Guidotti, besides the sacristan and the chaplain.

The morning was now far advanced, and all the preparations were completed. A large scaffold had been erected in the Piazza del Ponte, opposite to the castle of St. Angelo; the block, the axe, and the executioner, were each in the appointed place, and the cars waited at the doors of the prisons to bear the captives to their doom. When Giacomo and Bernardo had come forth, and were mounting to their places, one of the prisoners in Tordinona, being curious to see criminals of such noble blood, climbed up to the window of his cell, and in so doing, accidentally displaced with his foot a large flower-jar full of earth, which fell with great force on one of the torchbearers, who

LOWER HALL

was in advance of the crucifix, and killed him on the spot. Giacomo was dressed in a monk's robe of grey serge. On quitting his prison, he prostrated himself before the crucifix, and having uttered a prayer, he kissed the wounds in the hands, feet, and sides of the image of our Saviour, before he mounted the car. Bernardo, following the example of his brother, took his place beside him, and the procession quickly formed itself in order. A number of torchbearers of the Compagnia della Misericordia led the way; * after them was borne the crucifix, followed by more torchbearers; then came the car on which sat the prisoners, surrounded by members of the Compagnia dei Confortatori. The rear was brought up by the crowd. Leaving

* The Compagnia della Misericordia was one of the earliest institutions of priestly charity, dating its origin from the time of the great plague, A. D. 1348. During the ravages of this fearful scourge, a few individuals, actuated by religious zeal, and fearless of consequences, formed themselves into a society to administer comfort to the sick and dying. The survivors of these brave men afterwards assumed the monastic dress, and, under the title of the Brothers of Mercy, undertook for life those sacred duties which had been hitherto performed during a temporary emergency. Their chapel in Florence is situated close to the Cathedral, and is built over the gulph into which the plague-stricken corpses were cast. Men of high and low degree, the prince and the peasant, are included in this society. A black dress, with two small holes cut for the eyes, covers them from head to foot, completely concealing them from the recognition of passers by. Their duty is to attend upon all who require their aid; six of the brethren are constantly in attendance in the chapel, and medical help is always at hand. It is their duty also to visit the prisons, and prepare the condemned for death. If among those sentenced to death there should be one of their Order, they have the privilege of demanding his pardon and release. This is only granted once in the year, and for one criminal alone. The members of the Order are very numerous; they are not necessarily known or acquainted, but can discover themselves to each other by certain mysterious signs and words, only understood by the initiated. — *Transl.*

Tordinona, they turned into the Via dell' Orso; taking the Strada Appolinare to the left, and crossing the Piazza Navona and Piazza Pantaleone, they entered the Campo dei Fiori; then crossing over the Piazza del Duca, they stopped before the prison of Corte Savella. Beatrice and Lucrezia appeared a few minutes after the procession halted before the gates of their prison, conducted by the *Confortatori*. They knelt down before the crucifix, and continued praying for some time; then, getting into a car provided for them, they joined the procession, which pursued its course to the bridge of Ponte San Angelo.

Lucrezia wore a long dress of black cotton, fitting loosely, with large sleeves, and the waist fastened with a thick rope. On her feet she had black velvet slippers, cut low on the instep, with large black roses, made according to the fashion of the times, and a long veil fell from her head, almost to her waist, concealing her breast and shoulders. The veil Beatrice wore was of dark-grey silk, not so long as that of her step-mother; a handkerchief of cloth of silver covered her neck a petticoat of violet-colored cloth, with high shoes of white velvet, ornamented with crimson sandals and rosettes, completed her attire. The arms of both were pinioned, but their hands were left free, so that they were able to carry a crucifix, to which they unceasingly bent in prayer, and a handkerchief to shade their eyes in some measure from the glaring sun. The Signora Lucrezia, weakened and overcome by mental and bodily suffering, and her long confinement, shed floods of tears during the whole procession. Not so Beatrice: she allowed no tear to escape from her eyes, no sigh from her breast; but, like the martyrs of other days, she continued to pour forth prayers to her Savior; her beautiful countenance lightened with an expression of noble courage and resignation, showing to all that she was resolved to die as

became a Roman. Giacomo had even greater sufferings to bear than the rest of his family, since he was undergoing the torture from the moment he mounted the car till he arrived at the foot of the scaffold.* He bore up, however, with great fortitude, and, though enduring terrible agony, he allowed no visible evidence of his suffering to escape him. The crowd of carriages of all descriptions, and of people on horseback and on foot, was so great, that it was with much difficulty the guards could clear a way for the procession to reach the scaffold.

On their arrival, Beatrice, Lucrezia, and Giacomo were conducted into the Chapel of Justice, and Bernardo was ordered to ascend the scaffold. The poor boy, hardly daring to trust the reality of his pardon, thought from this order that he was to be the first to suffer, and had scarcely reached the summit of the scaffold when he fell down in a swoon. It was with great difficulty that he was restored to consciousness by the *Confortatori;* when, having been again assured of his pardon, he seated himself on a bench opposite to the block. The executioner then went to the chapel for Lucrezia. Having bound her hands behind her back, and removed the veil which covered her head and shoulders, he led her to the foot of the scaffold. She stopped there for a moment to offer up a few prayers, and devoutly kissed the crucifix; then, taking off her shoes, she mounted the ladder barefoot. Partly through shame at being thus exposed before the crowd, with her neck and breast uncovered, and partly through confusion and terror, her strength failed her, and it was only after repeated

* Squeezing the flesh of the victim with heated pincers, and in some instances tearing it from the body, was the torture applied to Giacomo, by one of the servants of the Inquisition, who sat on the car beside him. *Tannagliare* is the word used by the author. — *Transl.*

efforts that she was able to proceed to the block; crying out with a loud voice, "My God! my Savior! Oh, holy brothers, pray for my soul!" she placed her head in the groove to receive the fatal blow. Alessandro, the executioner, raised his axe high in the air, and with a single stroke severed the head from the body; then, seizing it by the hair, exposed it, still quivering, to the populace. When the blood had ceased flowing from it, he wrapped it in Lucrezia's veil, and placed it on a bier in the corner of the scaffold. Alessandro had scarcely descended from the scaffold, to lead forth Beatrice, when almost the whole of one side of it fell down, with a fearful crash, and buried in its ruins a number of the attendants of the executioner, who were employed in wiping away the blood. Four of them were killed on the spot, and several others severely wounded. In about half an hour every thing was repaired, and Beatrice, conducted by Alessandro, walked with a firm step across the square to the foot of the ladder. Taking off her slippers, she knelt down before the crucifix, and asked if her mother had died with courage. Receiving an answer in the affirmative, she burst forth in an eloquent prayer to God for the salvation of her own soul, and for those of the friends who were suffering with her.

"O, God! O, Saviour!" she exclaimed, "turn — turn one forgiving look towards me. Great has been my crime; but thou, Lord, who seest the heart, knowest that great was my suffering, — great my temptation. Why should I, a poor and sinful creature, fear this too mild death, when I feel, — I know that thou, perfect in thine innocence, didst die in so much torture and agony for my sins, and wilt take me to thyself."

Then, rising from her knees, she ascended the steps of the scaffold, and said aloud,

"Executioner, I am now ready: do your duty! I leave

this mortal scene, hoping, not fearing, trusting implicitly in the infinite mercy and love of God."

Having said these words, she laid her head on the block, and, in a few moments, was launched into eternity. The executioner then took up the head by the hair, and, having exposed it to the view of the crowd, placed it on the bier beside that of Lucrezia. Bernardo, horrified at all he had witnessed, again swooned away, and remained in a state of insensibility for nearly an hour. In the meantime, Giacomo, having gone through the same religious ceremonies as his ill-fated step-mother and sister, mounted the scaffold, and taking off his cap and cloak, turned his face towards the Via dei Banchi, and said, in a clear and impressive voice,

"During my examination, whilst suffering under the agonies of the torture, I accused my brother, Bernardo, of having been a party to the crime for which I now die: I desire here publicly to retract what I then said, and solemnly to declare that Bernardo neither assisted in, nor was privy to the murder which has been committed. Farewell, my friends! when I am gone remember me in your prayers."

Having said these words, and knelt down, Alessandro bound his legs to the block, bandaged his eyes, and struck him on the temples with a hammer until life was extinct; then, kneeling on his breast, he severed the head from the body, which he then quartered. The head was placed with the others on the bier.

When all was ended, Bernardo was conducted back to prison, where he remained for many weeks ill of a fever. The evening of the execution the mutilated body of Giacomo was removed to the church of the Misericordia, and there interred. The remains of Beatrice, clothed in the dress she wore on the scaffold, were borne, covered with

garlands of flowers, to the church of S. Pietro, in Montorio. The bier was followed by fifty torch-bearers, by the whole of the Society of Orphans of Rome, by all the Capuchin friars, and all the other orders of the Franciscans. She was buried before the high altar, beneath the pavement of the church. Later in the evening, the body of Lucrezia was conveyed to the church of S. Gregorio. Almost all Rome had flocked to witness the termination of this awful tragedy. The eye of the spectator, from the Piazza del Ponte, wandered over a sea of human heads; and those who could find no room in the streets, crowded the windows and roofs of the neighboring houses. Many people fainted, from the burning heat of the sun, and were with difficulty rescued from the feet of the crowd. After the termination of the execution, numbers were found lying dead in the streets, having been either suffocated or trampled to death under the feet of the horses. Besides these accidents, many others perished from the effects of a *coup-de-soleil*, which had struck them while waiting at the place of execution.

The principal interest in this mournful scene was centred in Beatrice, whose youth, beauty, and high birth, and, more than all, the brutal treatment she had received from her father, created a deep sympathy for her in her sufferings. Though Clement was well aware of this, he nevertheless refused all petitions for her pardon: he saw that the crimes of parricide and murder had increased, and were disturbing the tranquility of his reign, and the safety of his state; he considered, too, that perhaps the example would be more felt when the sympathies of the people were so strongly roused as in the present case; and that the almost total annihilation of one of the wealthiest and noblest families of the Roman aristocracy would be a fearful warning to those who were inclined to forget the

laws of their God and their country, and make their own passions and impulses the guide of their actions.

Signora Lucrezia was about fifty years old, low in stature, and very stout; her complexion was fair, with a mild expression of countenance; her nose small, eyes jet-black, and hair of the same color. Beatrice was only twenty years of age, rather below than above the middle stature; her limbs round, and well-formed, her eyes small, but full of expression, and her cheeks dimpled; and, even after death, she wore the same sweet smile as in life; her mouth was small, and her fair hair, which curled naturally, falling in luxuriant ringlets over her shoulders, added greatly to her beauty. Giacomo was twenty-six years of age, small, like the rest of his family, with dark hair, and a thick beard; and Bernardo so much resembled his sister, that many people, seeing him sitting on the scaffold, enveloped in his cloak, mistook him for Beatrice. In the following month, on the occasion of the fête of Santa Croce, he was set at liberty, on the payment of a fine of twenty-five thousand dollars to the government.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY.

CHARLOTTE CORDAY;

THE ASSASSIN OF MARAT.

WHILST Paris, France, and the leaders and armies of factions, were preparing to tear the republic to pieces, the shadow of a mighty spirit was hovering over the soul of a young girl, and about to disconcert both men and events, by placing the arm and the life of a woman across the path of the destiny of the revolution.

In a lonely by-street of the city of Caen, then the centre of the Girondist insurrection, may still be seen an old, gray, weather-beaten house, at the end of a court-yard. There, in the beginning of 1793, lived a grand-niece of the great tragic poet, Pierre Corneille. Poets and heroes are of the same race. There is no other difference between them than that of conception and achievement: the latter realize the conceptions of the former; but the thought is the same. Women are naturally as enthusiastic as the former, and as courageous as the latter. Poetry, heroism, and love, are of the same family.

This house belonged to a poor, aged, infirm, and childless widow, named Madame de Bretteville. She had had with her, for a few years, a young relation, whom she had brought up for the support of her old age, and to enliven her solitude. This damsel was then in her twenty-fourth year. Her stature, though tall, did not exceed that of the

generality of the fine, graceful women of Normandy. Her complexion partook of the ardor of the south, and the rosy hue of the women of the north. Her hair, which seemed dark, when tied round her head, or opening in two waves upon her brow, had a golden tinge at the extremity of the tresses. Her eyes, large, and extending to the temples, were blue when she was lost in reflection, but changed to black when she became animated; they were shaded by long eyelashes, darker than her hair, and adding depth to the soul which beamed in her eye. Her nose united with her forehead by an imperceptible curve; and her Grecian mouth and lips had a wavering, indefinable expression, between tenderness and severity. Her prominent chin, divided by a deep dimple, gave to the lower part of her visage a character of manly resolution, which contrasted with the perfectly feminine grace of the rest of her countenance. Her cheeks, glowing with youth, possessed the firm fulness of health. The least emotion would cause her to blush or turn pale. Her broad, though somewhat thin chest, was a bust for a sculptor. Her skin was white. Her arms were strong and muscular, her hands long, and her fingers tapering. Her costume, conformable to her limited means and the solitude in which she lived, was of sober simplicity. She trusted to nature, and disdained every artifice and caprice of fashion in her dress. Persons who knew her in her youth, describe her as being uniformly dressed in a dark-colored robe, cut like a riding-habit, and wearing a gray felt hat, turned up at the edge, and ornamented with black ribbons, as was then the mode among woman of her condition. The sound of her voice, that living echo which sums up all the deep feelings of the soul in a vibration of the air, left a deep and tender impression on the ears of those whom she addressed. They would speak of the sound of that voice ten years after they

had heard it, as a strange music indelibly impressed on their memory.

This young damsel was named Charlotte Corday-d'Armont. Although of noble extraction, she was born in a cottage in the village of Ligneries, not far from Argentan. Her father, François de Corday-d'Armont, was one of those provincial *gentilshommes* whom their poverty almost confounded with the peasantry. Occupied with agricultural pursuits, he beguiled his leisure with political and literary studies, then much diffused among that uneasy class of the population. His soul inhaled the approaching revolution: he had written a few works against despotism and hereditary right. Those writings were full of the forthcoming spirit: he had a horror of superstition, was imbued with the ardor of the rising philosophy, and with the presentiment of a necessary revolution. He remained, however, buried and unknown, in the bosom of his family, then yearly increasing. Five children, two boys and three girls, of whom Charlotte was the second, made him feel more keenly every day the misery of poverty. His wife died of this affliction, leaving a father for her young daughters, but, in reality, leaving her daughters orphans as regards those domestic associations of which children are deprived by the death of their mother.

Charlotte and her sisters lived a few years longer at Ligneries, almost abandoned to the care of nature. At length necessity forced M. de Corday to separate from his daughters. Under the auspices of noble birth and poverty, they entered a monastery at Caen, of which Madame de Belsunce was the abbess.

Charlotte was then in her thirteenth year. For some time the young girl was captivated with monastic life, so full of quiet exercises, intimacy, friendship, and affection. Her fervent soul and impassioned imagination led her to

indulge in those sublime reveries in which God seems to reveal himself: a state of the soul which the affectionate assiduity of a nun, and the impressiveness of childhood so easily change into faith, and the exercises of devotion. For a few years, Charlotte was an example of piety. She meditated closing her dawning life in its first stage, and burying herself in that sepulchre, where, instead of death, she found repose, friendship, and happiness.

But, as her soul expanded, she soon arrived at the term of her childish faith. Besides her first received dogmas, she beheld others, new, luminous, and sublime. Accordingly, she abandoned neither God nor virtue, the first passion of her soul; but she gave them other names and other forms. Philosophy, which was then inundating France with light, cast its vivid rays through the grates of the monasteries.

Charlotte formed at the convent those tender predilections of childhood which seem to be the kindred ties of the heart. These friends were two young ladies of noble family and humble fortune like herself, — Mesdemoiselles de Faudoas and De Forbin. The abbess, Madame de Belsunce, and her assistant, Madame Doulcet de Pontécoulant, had taken particular notice of Charlotte. They used to admit her into the somewhat worldly society which custom authorized abbesses to keep with their relations from without, even within the walls of their convents. It was thus that Charlotte became acquainted with two young men, nephews of those ladies, — M. de Belsunce, the colonel of a cavalry regiment at Caen, and M. Doulcet de Pontécoulant, an officer in the king's guards: the former of whom was soon to be massacred in a riot at Caen, and the latter afterwards to abet the revolution, enter the Legislative Assembly and the Convention, and suffer exile and persecution for the cause of the Girondists.

At the time of the suppression of the monasteries, Charlotte was nineteen years of age. The distress of her family had increased. Her two brothers, engaged in the king's service, had emigrated. One of her sisters was dead; the other superintended their father's poor household at Argentan. The old aunt, Madame de Brettville, received Charlotte into her house at Caen. She kept but one servant. Charlotte assisted that woman in domestic affairs, received the old friends of the house, and in the evening would accompany her aunt to those societies of nobility in the city which popular fury had not yet entirely dispersed. Having fulfilled such domestic duties, she was in undisturbed possession of her time and thoughts. She passed her days in recreations about the courtyard and the garden, and in reading and meditation. She enjoyed entire freedom in her opinions and the choice of her studies. Her aunt's religious and political opinions were habits rather than convictions. She preserved them as the costume of her age and times, but did not impose them upon others. She allowed her niece to adopt the authors, opinions, and journals that she preferred. Charlotte's age inclined her to read novels, which furnish ready-made dreams for the imagination of pensive souls; but her mind led her to the study of philosophical works, which transform the vague instincts of humanity into sublime theories of government, and to books of history, which change theories into actions, and ideas into men.

But, although her imagination indulged in such dreams, her soul never lost its modesty, nor her youth its chastity. Consumed with the strong necessity of loving, and inspiring, and sometimes feeling, the dawn of love, her reserve, dependency, and misery, ever caused her to conceal her sentiments. She did violence to her nature, in order to sever the first bonds of love from her heart. Her love,

thus suppressed by will and destiny, changed not its nature but its object. It became transformed into a vague and sublime devotion to an ideal of public happiness. Her heart was too vast to contain only her own felicity: she wished it to contain that of a whole people. She became more wrapped up in these ideas, incessantly inquiring of herself what service she could do for humanity. The thirst of sacrifice had become her ruling passion; and that sacrifice, even though it should be a bloody one, she was determined to accomplish. Her soul had reached that desperate state which is the suicide of happiness; she contended not for glory and ambition, like Madame Roland, but for the sake of liberty and humanity, like Judith or Epicharis. She only wanted an occasion; she watched, and thought she had found one.

It was the time when the Girondists were contending, with glorious courage and prodigious eloquence, against their enemies in the Convention. The Jacobins, so it was believed, wanted to snatch the republic out of the hands of the Girondist party, only to plunge France into a bloody anarchy. In place of those great men who seemed to be defending at the breach the last ramparts of society and the sacred home of every citizen, Marat, sprung from the loathsome dregs of the populace, triumphing over the laws by sedition, carried in the arms of rioters to the tribune, now assumed the dictatorship of anarchy, robbery, and assassination, and menaced independence, property, liberty, life itself in the departments. These convulsions, excesses, and terrors, had deeply moved the provinces of Normandy.

Charlotte Corday's wounded heart felt all these calamities inflicted on her native land. She saw the ruin of France, and the victims; she thought, too, she perceived the tyrant. She vowed to herself that she would avenge

the former, punish the latter, and save her country. For some days she brooded over her vague resolution in her soul, without knowing what act France demanded of her, or what source of crime it was most urgent to remove. She studied men, circumstances, and the state of affairs, in order that her blood might not be shed in vain!

The Girondists whom the city of Caen had taken under its protection were lodged all together, by the town, in what had been the Intendant's palace. There, meetings of the people used to be held, at which the citizens, and even women, were present, in order to contemplate and hear those first victims of anarchy — those last avengers of liberty. On leaving those assemblies, the people would cry *to arms!* and incite their sons, brothers, and husbands, to enlist in the battalions. Charlotte Corday, surmounting the prejudices of her rank, and the timidity of her sex and age, had the courage to attend those meetings several times, with a few of her female friends. She desired to behold those whom she was about to save. The situation, the language, and the countenances of those first apostles of liberty, almost all young men, became engraven in her soul, and imparted something more personal and impassioned to her devotion to their cause.

Charlotte witnessed from a balcony the enlisting of the volunteers and the departure of their battalions. The enthusiasm of those young citizens, abandoning their homes in order to protect the violated asylum of the national representation, and to brave bullets or the guillotine, chimed with her own. After their departure she was occupied with one single thought: to anticipate their arrival at Paris, spare their generous lives, and render their patriotism superfluous by delivering France from tyranny before their arrival.

A presentiment of terror was then pervading France.

The scaffold was erected at Paris, and was expected to be shortly seen throughout the republic. The power of the Montagne and Marat, if it triumphed, could be defended only by the hand of the executioner. It was said that the monster had already written lists of proscription, and counted the number of heads that were to be sacrificed to his suspicions and vengeance. Two thousand five hundred victims were marked out at Lyons, three thousand at Marseilles, twenty-eight thousand at Paris, and three hundred thousand in Brittany and Calvados. The name of Marat caused a shudder like the name of death. To prevent the shedding of so much blood, Charlotte was resolved to give her own. Under specious pretexts, she presented herself at the Hôtel de l'Intendance, where the citizens who had business with the deputies were permitted to approach them. She saw Buzot, Pethion, and Louvet, and had two conversations with Barbaroux. She pretended to be a petitioner, and asked the young Marsaillais for a letter of introduction to one of his colleagues of the Convention, who could present her to the Minister of the Interior. She said she had a petition to present to the government in favor of Mademoiselle de Forbin, the friend of her childhood. Barbaroux gave her a letter to Duperret, one of the seventy-three deputies of the Gironde, forgotten in the first proscription. This letter, which subsequently caused Duperret to ascend the scaffold, contained not one word that could be imputed as a crime to him who received it. Provided with this letter, and a passport which she had taken a few days before for Argentan, Charlotte thanked Barbaroux, and bade him farewell. The sound of her voice filled Barbaroux with a presentiment then incomprehensible to him. "If we had known her design," said he afterwards, "and if we had been capable of committing a crime by such a hand,

Marat is not the man we should have pointed out to her vengeance."

The last struggle now took place within her, between thought and action; but only the gravity of her countenance and a few tears, ill-concealed from the eyes of her household, revealed the involuntary agony of her suicide. When questioned by her aunt, "I weep," said she, "for the miseries of my country, for those of my parents, and for yours; as long as Marat lives, nobody will be sure of one day's existence." Madame de Bretteville remembered later, that, on entering Charlotte's room to wake her, she had found on her bed an old Bible, open at the book of Judith, and that she had seen these words underlined with a pencil: "Judith left the city, adorned with marvellous beauty, with which the Lord had gifted her, to deliver Israel." On the same day, Charlotte, on walking out, to prepare for her departure, found in the street some of the citizens of Caen playing at cards before their door. "You play," said she, in an accent of bitter irony, "and our country is dying!" Her language and manner showed her impatience and eagerness to depart. She accordingly departed, on the seventh of July, for Argentan. There she bade her father and her sister a last farewell, telling them she was about to seek an asylum and a livelihood in England, and that she wanted to receive her father's benediction before that long separation. Her father approved of her departure; and, having embraced him and her sister, Charlotte returned the same day to Caen. There, she deceived the tenderness of her aunt by the same stratagem, telling her she was going soon to England, where some of her friends had found her an asylum. She had secretly taken her place to depart, on the morrow, by the Paris diligence. She made little presents of gowns and embroidery, to be worn after her departure, to some

of the companions of her childhood. She shared her favorite books among her most intimate friends, reserving only one volume of Plutarch, as if unwilling to separate, in that critical moment of her life, from the society of those great men with whom she had lived, and wished to die. At length, early in the morning of the ninth of July, she took under her arm a small parcel, containing the most indispensable articles of dress, embraced her aunt, and told her she was going to sketch the hay-makers in the neighboring meadows. With a sheet of drawing-paper in her hand, she then departed, never to return. At the foot of the stairs she met the child of a poor workman, named Robert, who lodged in the house, and was generally playing about the yard. She used sometimes to give him pictures. "Here, Robert," said she, giving him her drawing-paper, which she no longer required for an excuse, "this is for you; be a good boy, and kiss me; for you will never see me again." And she embraced the child, and shed a tear upon his cheek. That tear was the last shed on the threshold of her youth; she had nothing now to give but her blood.

The freedom and frankness of her conversation in the coach which transported her towards Paris, inspired her travelling companions with no other sentiment than that of admiration, benevolence, and curiosity. Throughout the first day she was constantly playing with a little girl whom chance had placed by her side in the carriage. The other travellers, being enthusiastic *Montagnards*, were loud in their imprecations against the Girondins, and in their admiration of Marat. Dazzled with the loveliness of the young lady, they endeavored to get from her her name, the intention of her journey, and her address at Paris. She repressed their familiarity by the modesty of her manners, the evasive brevity of her replies, and, at length,

by pretending to be asleep. One of them, more reserved than the others, being captivated by so much modesty and beauty, avowed to her his respectful admiration, and entreated permission to ask her hand of her relations. She turned this sudden love into a good-natured jest, and promised the young man that at some future time she would inform him of her name and intentions. She delighted them all to the end of the journey, and they were sorry to leave her company.

She entered Paris at noon on Thursday, the eleventh of July, and gave orders to be conducted to the *Hotel de la Providence*, an inn which had been recommended to her at Caen. She went to bed at five in the evening, and slept soundly till the following morning.

She then arose, dressed herself simply, but decently, and repaired to the house of Duperret. He was at the Convention. His daughters, in their father's absence, received from the young stranger Barbaroux' letter of introduction. Duperret was expected back in the evening. Charlotte returned to her hôtel, and passed the whole day alone in her room. At six o'clock she went again to call on M. Duperret. Being pressed for time, he told her he could not take her that evening to the minister, Garat, but that he would go and accompany her from her lodgings on the following morning.

That same evening, a decree of the Convention ordered seals to be placed on the furniture of such deputies as were suspected of being attached to the twenty-two proscribed Girondins. Duperret was among the number. He went nevertheless, very early in the morning of the twelfth, to accompany Charlotte to the minister. Garat did not receive them. Duperret seemed to be discouraged by this disappointment. He represented to the young girl that his being treated as suspicious, and the measure taken that

night against him by the Convention, rendered his patronage rather injurious than useful to his clients. The stranger did not insist; like a person who no longer wants the pretext used to disguise an action, and who is contented with the first argument to abandon the design. Duperret left her at the *Hotel de la Providence*. She pretended to enter, but immediately left it again, and inquired her way, from street to street, as far as the Palais-Royal.

She entered the garden, not as a stranger who wishes to satisfy curiosity, but as a traveller who has not a day to spare. She looked about, under the galleries, for a cutler's shop. She found one, entered, chose a *couteau-poignard* with an ebony handle, paid three francs for it, concealed it beneath her neckerchief, and returned slowly to the garden. She sat down, for a moment, on a stone bench against the arcade. There, though buried in meditation, she allowed herself to be amused by children who were playing about, some of whom frolicked at her feet and leaned on her knees. She still had a woman's smile for those innocent amusements of childhood. Her indecision oppressed her, not on account of the act for which she was already armed, but for the manner of accomplishing it. She wanted to make a solemn sacrifice that would cast terror into the souls of the adherents of the tyrant. Her first thought had been to accost Marat and slay him in the Champ-de-Mars, at the grand ceremony of the federation. That solemnity having been postponed, her next intention had constantly been to sacrifice Marat at the head of the *Montagne* in the midst of the Convention, before the face of his admirers and accomplices. Her hope was to be instantly torn in pieces herself by the people in their fury, without leaving any other vestige or memory than two dead bodies and tyranny drowned in her

blood! But, since her arrival in Paris, she had heard, in the course of conversation with Duperret, that Marat no longer showed himself at the Convention. It was, therefore, necessary to find her victim elsewhere, and to deceive him in order to approach him.

She resolved to do so. This dissimulation, which wounded the natural loyalty of her soul, changing courage into cunning and immolation into assassination, was the first remorse of her conscience, and her first punishment. This cost her more pain than even the deed; she confessed it herself; conscience is just in the face of posterity.

She returned to her room, and wrote Marat a note which she left herself at the door of the *Friend of the People:* "I write from Caen," said she to him; "your love for our native land makes me presume that you will be eager to learn the unfortunate events of that part of the republic. I will come to your house at one o'clock; have the goodness to receive me, and to grant me one moment's conversation. I will enable you to do good service to France."

Charlotte, relying on the effect of this note, repaired accordingly to Marat's house at the appointed hour; but she could not be introduced to him. She then handed the portress a second note, still more pressing and insidious than the former. "I wrote to you this morning, Marat, said she; "have you received my letter? I cannot believe it, since your door is refused me. I hope you will grant me an interview to-morrow. I repeat that I arrive from Caen, and have to reveal to you the most important secrets for the safety of the republic. Besides, I am persecuted for the cause of liberty. I am unfortunate: this is a sufficient title to your patriotism."

Without waiting for an answer, Charlotte left her room at seven in the evening, dressed more carefully than usual, in order the better to captivate, by a respectable appear-

ance, the household of Marat. Her white robe was open to the shoulders, which were covered with a silk handkerchief, concealing her bosom, and tied round her waist. Her hair was confined in a Norman cap, with pendant lace on either cheek. The cap was bound round her temples with a broad, green silk ribbon. Her hair fell from the back of her head in broad plaits, a few curls only waving on her neck. No paleness of complexion, no wildness of look, no emotion in her voice, revealed in her the messenger of death. Such was her captivating appearance when she knocked at Marat's door.

Marat inhabited the first floor of a dilapidated house in the Rue des Cordeliers. His lodging consisted of an ante-chamber, a study, a small bath-room, a sleeping-room, and a saloon. This lodging was almost bare. Marat's numerous works lying in heaps on the floor, newspapers, still wet with ink, scattered on the chairs and tables, correctors of the press constantly running in and out, women folding and directing pamphlets and journals, the worn-out stairs, the unswept passages, altogether bore witness to the bustle and disorder in which the busy journalist passed his life. Marat's household was that of an humble artisan. The woman who directed it, formerly called Catherine Evrard, was then named Albertine Marat, since the Friend of the People had given her his name in taking her for his wife *one fine day with the sun for witness,* in manner of Jean Jacques Rousseau. One servant assisted this woman in domestic affairs, whilst a man, named Laurent Basse, did errands and the out-door work.

Marat's feverish activity had not been lessened by the slow malady which was consuming him. The inflammation of his blood seemed to kindle his soul. He never ceased writing, in his bed, and even in his bath, accusing his enemies, and exciting the Convention and the Corde-

liers. Full of the presentiment of death, he seemed to fear only lest the short time he had to live would not allow him to destroy enough of the guilty. More eager to kill than to live, he hastened to despatch before him as many victims as possible, as so many hostages given by the sword to the revolution. Terror, which issued from that house, returned under another form, — the perpetual fear of assassination. His companions and friends thought they beheld as many daggers raised against him as he himself suspended over the heads of three hundred thousand citizens. Nobody was allowed to approach his person but sure friends, or informers previously recommended and examined.

Charlotte was ignorant of these obstacles, but she suspected them. She alighted from the coach on the opposite side of the street facing Marat's house. The portress refused at first to allow the young stranger to enter the yard. The latter insisted, and ascended a few stairs, though called back in vain by the portress. At the noise, Marat's mistress came and opened the door, but refused to let her enter the apartment. The distant altercation between these women, one begging to be permitted to speak to the Friend of the People, and the other obstinately stopping her at the door, reached the ears of Marat. He understood from their broken sentences that his visitor was the stranger from whom he had received two letters that day. In a loud, imperious voice, he ordered the stranger to be admitted. Either through jealousy or distrust, Albertine obeyed reluctantly, and with ill-humor. She introduced the maiden into the room where Marat then was, and withdrew, leaving the passage-door half open, that she might hear the least word or motion.

The room was dimly lit. Marat was in his bath. Although forced to give repose to his body, he gave none to

his mind. A rough plank, with either end resting on the edge of the bath, was covered with papers, open letters, and leaves on which he had begun to write. In his right hand he held a pen, which the arrival of the stranger had suspended on the page. The paper was a letter to the Convention, demanding the judgment and proscription of the remaining Bourbons tolerated in France. On the right of the bath was an enormous block of oak, containing a common leaden inkstand. Marat, covered up in his bath with a dirty cloth stained with ink, had only his head and shoulders, the upper part of his breast, and his right arm out of the water. There was nothing in the appearance of the man to affect the eye of a woman, or to arrest her arm. Greasy hair bound in a dirty handkerchief, a shelving forehead, impudent, staring eyes, prominent cheek bones, an immensely wide, sneering mouth, a hairy breast, lank limbs, and a livid skin,— such was Marat.

Charlotte avoided looking at him for fear of betraying the horror of her soul at the sight of him. Standing, with cast-down eyes and her hands by her side, near the bath, she waited for Marat to question her about the state of things in Normandy. She replied in a few words, giving her answers the sense and coloring most likely to please him. He afterwards asked her to tell him the names of the deputies who had taken refuge at Caen. She dictated, and he noted them down. Then, when he had finished writing the names, "'Tis well!" said he, in the tone of a man sure of his revenge; "before a week is past they shall all go to the guillotine!" At those words, as if the soul of Charlotte had waited for his last crime before it could resolve to give the blow, she drew her knife from her bosom, and plunged it with super-human strength up to the hilt in the heart of Marat. With the same motion she drew the bloody knife from the body of the victim,

and dropped it at her feet. "Help! dear friend, help!" cried Marat, as he expired under the blow.

At that cry of agony, Albertine, the servant-maid, and Laurent Basse rushed into the room and caught Marat's lifeless head in their arms. Charlotte was standing behind the window-curtain, motionless, and as if petrified by the crime she had committed. The transparency of the curtain, in the last gleam of departing day, revealed the shadow of her body. Laurent seized a chair and aimed an uncertain blow at her head, which stretched her on the floor. Marat's mistress stamped upon her and trampled her under foot in her fury. At the uproar and the shrieks of the women, the lodgers ran in. The neighbors and passengers stopped in the street, ran up the stairs, and crowded into the apartment. The people in the yard, and soon the whole neighborhood, demanded, with furious vociferations, that the assassin should be thrown to them, in order to avenge the death of the idol of the people. The soldiers of the neighboring posts, and the national guards, soon assembled, and some order was restored. The surgeons arrived and endeavored to dress the wound. The bloody water gave the sanguinary man the appearance of expiring in a bath of blood. When lifted to his bed he was a corpse.

Charlotte had risen to her feet. Two soldiers were now holding her hands till ropes were brought to tie them. The hedge of bayonets which surrounded her could hardly keep off the crowd, who were rushing at her to tear her in pieces. A fanatical Cordelier, named Langlois, had picked up the bloody knife, and was making a funeral speech over the dead body of the victim, interrupting his lamentations to brandish the knife, as if he was stabbing the assassin to the heart. But nothing seemed to affect Charlotte, except the heart-rending cries of Marat's concubine.

Her countenance seemed to express her astonishment at the sight of that woman; at not having reflected that such a man might yet be loved, and a regret at having been forced to wound two hearts in stabbing one.

To the invectives of the orator, and the groans of the people for their idol, her lips wore a smile of bitter contempt. "Poor people," said she, "you wish for my death, and yet you owe me an altar for having rid you of a monster! Cast me to those madmen," said she to the soldiers who protected her, "since they regret him, they are worthy to be my executioners."

The commissary at length arrived, drew up a *procès-verbal* of the murder, and ordered Charlotte to be conducted to Marat's saloon in order to question her. He wrote down her answers. She gave them calmly, in a loud, firm voice, in no other tone than that of proud satisfaction for the act she had committed.

The report of the death of the Friend of the People, spread with the rapidity of lightning, and soon reached the Convention. Some of the deputies instantly left the assembly and hastened to the spot where the crime had been committed. There they found the crowd increasing, and Charlotte replying to the questions of the commissary. They were struck dumb with astonishment at the sight of her youth and beauty, as well as at the calmness and resolution of her language. Charlotte seemed so to transfigure crime that, even by the side of the victim, they felt pity for the assassin.

The *procès-verbal* being ended, the deputies ordered her to be transported to the Abbaye, that being the nearest prison to Marat's house. They called the same coach that had brought her. The street was then filled with a dense crowd, shouting with rage, which rendered the transfer difficult. The detachments of fusileers which had succes-

sively arrived, the scarfs of the commissaries, and the respect due to the members of the Convention, could ill-restrain the people, and they had much difficulty in forcing a passage. The moment Charlotte, with her hands tied with ropes, and supported by the arms of two of the national guard who were holding her elbows, appeared on the threshold of the house to step into the coach, the people crowded around the wheels with such furious gestures and howlings, that, overcome with the scene, she fainted.

Chabot, Drouet, and Legendre, followed her to the Abbaye, and compelled her to undergo a second examination which lasted till late at night. Legendre, proud of his revolutionary importance, and jealous of being thought also worthy of martyrdom, believed, or feigned to believe, that he recognised in Charlotte Corday a young girl who had come to his house the day before, disguised as a nun, and whom he had sent away.

"Citizen Legendre is mistaken," said Charlotte, with a smile that disconcerted the conceit of the deputy. "I never saw him, neither did I ever consider the life or death of such a man so important to the safety of the republic." She was then searched; but nothing was found on her but the key of her box, her silver thimble, a ball of cotton, two hundred francs in *assignats* and in silver, a gold watch, made by a watchmaker of Caen, and her passport.

Her neckerchief still concealed the sheath of the knife with which she had stabbed Marat.

"Do you know this knife?"

"Yes!"

"Who induced you to commit this crime?"

"I saw France," said she, "about to be torn in pieces by civil war, and being convinced that Marat was the

principal cause of the perils and calamities of my country, I have sacrificed his life and my own for its salvation."

"What have you done since Thursday, the day you arrived at Paris?"

To such questions she related sincerely, word for word, all the circumstances of her abode at Paris, and of her action.

When the interrogatory was ended, Chabot, dissatisfied with the result, seemed to be devouring with his eyes the countenance, the figure, and the whole person of the young lady handcuffed before him. He thought he perceived a folded paper pinned to her bosom, and stretched forth his hand to seize it. Charlotte had forgotten that paper, which contained an address that she had written to the French nation, in order to engage the citizens to punish their tyrants. She imagined she perceived in Chabot's gesture and action an outrage to decency. Being deprived of the use of her hands by her bonds, she could not parry the insult. Honor, and the indignation she felt, caused her to spring back with such a convulsive motion of her body and shoulders, that the string of her robe burst, and her robe falling below her shoulders, left her bosom bare. She stooped in confusion, as quick as thought, and bent herself double in order to hide her nakedness from her judges.

Patriotism rendered these men neither cynical nor unfeeling. Their modesty seemed as much hurt as Charlotte Corday's at that involuntary suffering of her innocence. She entreated them to untie her hands that she might adjust her robe. One of them undid her bonds, turning his head aside. As soon as her hands were free, Charlotte turned round towards the wall and arranged her dress. They took advantage of her hands being free to make her sign her answers. The ropes had left deep blue marks on her arms. When they were about to handcuff

her again, she entreated her gaolers to allow her to draw down her sleeves and to put on gloves, in order to avoid an unnecessary torment before her final punishment. The poor girl's look and accent were such while she was addressing this prayer to her judges, and showing them her discolored hands, that Harmand could not help shedding tears, and he retired to conceal them.

She was then sent to prison, and guarded within sight by two gendarmes, even during the night: she protested, but in vain, against that profanation of her sex. The committee of general safety hastened on her triál and execution. From her miserable flock-bed she heard the public criers shouting an account of the murder in the streets, and the imprecations of the crowd vowing a thousand deaths against the assassin. Charlotte did not take that voice of the people for the decree of posterity, and through the horror she inspired, she foresaw her apotheosis. It was in this spirit that she wrote to the committee of general safety, to allow her to have her picture taken.

Montané, the president of the revolutionary tribunal, came on the morrow to interrogate the prisoner. Touched by her youth and beauty, and convinced of the sincerity of her fanaticism, which almost made the assassin innocent in the eye of human justice, he wanted to save her life. He directed the questions, and tacitly insinuated the replies so as to make her judges believe her to be rather mad than criminal. Charlotte was obstinate in thwarting this merciful intention of the president. She justified her act. They then transferred her to the Conciergerie. Madame Richard, the wife of the governor of the prison, received her with the compassion which her youth and present position naturally inspired. Owing to her indulgence, Charlotte obtained paper, ink, and quiet, of which she took advantage to write a hasty letter to Barbaroux,

giving him an account of all the circumstances that had happened since her arrival in Paris, in a style in which patriotism, death, and mirth are mingled together, like sorrow and gladness in the parting glass at a farewell banquet.

Her letter to her father, written the last, was short and full of affection and emotion. "Forgive me," said she, "for having disposed of my existence without your permission. I have avenged many innocent victims, and prevented many disasters. The people, undeceived one day, will rejoice at being delivered from a tyrant. If I endeavored to persuade you that I was going over to England, it was because I wanted to remain unknown. I found it was impossible; but I hope you will not be molested. In every case you have defenders at Caen. I have chosen Gustave Doulcet de Pontécoulant for my advocate. Such an attempt cannot be defended: it is merely a form. Adieu, dear papa. I pray you to forget me, or rather to rejoice in my fate. My cause is a noble one. I embrace my sister, whom I love with my whole heart. Forget not this verse of Corneille:—

Le crime fait la honte, et non pas l'échafaud.

I am to be tried to-morrow at eight o'clock."

This allusion to a verse of her great uncle, by reminding her father of that illustrious name, and the heroism of their blood, seemed to place her deed under the safeguard of the genius of her family.

On the following morning, the gendarmes came, at eight o'clock, to conduct her to the revolutionary tribunal. The room was situated above the vaults of the Conciergerie. Before proceeding to it, she arranged her hair and her dress, in order to meet death with decency; then she said, with a smile, to the governor, who was assisting her in

making these preparations, "M. Richard, I pray you to take care that my breakfast be prepared when I descend from above: my judges are doubtless in a hurry. I wish to take my last meal with Madame Richard and you."

The hour of her trial was known in Paris the night before. Curiosity, horror, interest, and compassion had attracted an immense crowd to the court of justice, and filled every avenue. When the prisoner drew near, a low murmur arose from that multitude, like a malediction on her name. But no sooner had she pierced the crowd, and dazzled every eye with her surpassing beauty, than the murmur of anger changed to an emotion of compassion and admiration.

When she had taken her seat on the prisoner's bench, she was asked whether she had a defender. She replied she had intrusted that duty to a friend; but, not seeing him present, she presumed he had lost his courage. The president then appointed her an official defender, — young Claveau-Lagarde, since illustrious for his defence of the queen, and already noted for his eloquence and courage in causes at a time when the advocate shared the perils of the accused. Lagarde placed himself at the bar. Charlotte looked at him closely and uneasily, as though she feared that, to save her life, her defender might endanger her honor. Marat's widow gave her deposition with tears and sobs. Charlotte, affected by the woman's grief, cut short her deposition by exclaiming, "Yes, yes, I killed him." She then related the premeditation of an act conceived three months before, the project of stabbing the tyrant in the midst of the Convention, and the stratagem she had used to approach him. She ended by saying, "I have killed one man to save a hundred thousand. I was a republican long before the revolution."

The prosecutor having reproached her with plunging

the knife downwards, that the blow might be more sure, told her she must doubtless have well practised the crime! At that supposition, which confounded all her ideas by assimilating her to professional murderers, she uttered an exclamation of shame: "Oh! the monster!" cried she, "he takes me for an assassin!"

Fouquier-Tinville then summed up, and adjudged her deserving of capital punishment. Her advocate arose. "The prisoner," said he, "avows the crime; she owns it was long premeditated, and she confesses the most overwhelming particulars. Citizens, this is her entire defence. This imperturbable calmness and complete self-denial, betraying no remorse in the presence of death, are, in one point of view, something beyond human nature, and can only be accounted for by the exaltation of the political fanaticism which armed her hand with the poniard. It is for you to judge how much such an immovable fanaticism should weigh in the scales of justice. I refer the matter to your consciences."

The jury unanimously pronounced sentence of death. She heard the decree unmoved. The president having asked her whether she had anything to say on the nature of the penalty, she disdained to answer, and turning to her defender, "Sir," said she, in a sweet, affecting tone of voice, "you have defended me as I wished, and I thank you. I owe you a testimony of my gratitude and esteem; I offer one worthy of you. These gentlemen" (pointing to the judges) "have just declared my property confiscated. I owe something to the prison, and I bequeath you that debt to pay for me." Whilst they were questioning her, and receiving her answers, she perceived, amidst the auditory a painter sketching her features. She had turned obligingly, and with a smile, towards the artist, that he might take her likeness the better. She was thinking of

immortality, and had already taken her position in the future.

Behind the painter was a youth, whose fair hair, blue eyes, and pale complexion, proclaimed him to be a child of the north. He was standing on tip-toe, in order to have a better view of the prisoner. At every answer, the manly vigor, and almost feminine sound of Charlotte's voice made him shudder and change color. Unable to master his emotion, he provoked several times, by his involuntary exclamations, the murmurs of the crowd, and attracted the prisoner's attention. The moment the president pronounced sentence of death, that young man half arose, with the gesture of a man who protests in his heart, and immediately sank back, as if his strength failed him. Charlotte, indifferent about her own fate, noticed that motion. She felt that, at a moment when she was abandoned by all on earth, one soul was attached to her, and that, in the midst of that hostile crowd, she had one unknown friend. She thanked him with a look: it was their only communication on earth.

That young stranger was Adam Lux, a German republican, deputed to Paris by the revolutionary party of Mayence, in order to unite the movements of Germany with those of France in the common cause of human reason and the freedom of nations.

On returning to the Conciergerie, whence she was soon to depart for the scaffold, Charlotte smiled at her prison companions, assembled in the passages and courts to see her pass. She said to the governor, "I had hoped we should breakfast once more together; but the judges have kept me so long that you must forgive me for having broken my word." The executioner entered. She asked him to allow her one minute more to finish a letter. This letter was neither an act of weakness nor of emotion, but

the expression of wounded friendship, wishing to leave an immortal reproach for what she believed to be a cowardly desertion. It was addressed to Doulcet de Pontécoulant, whom she had known at her aunt's, and whom she believed she had invoked in vain to defend her. The letter was as follows: — "Doulcet de Pontécoulant is a coward for having refused to defend me when the thing was so easy. He who has done so has performed the task with all possible dignity, and I shall feel grateful to him to the last moment." This vengeance was undeserved by him whom she accused from the brink of the grave. Young Pontécoulant, being absent from Paris, had not received her letter: his generosity and courage leave no doubt that he would have performed this service for her. Charlotte carried with her an error and an act of injustice to the scaffold.

A priest, authorized by the public prosecutor, presented himself, according to custom, to offer her the consolations of religion. "Thank those who have had the kindness to send you," said she, in an affectionate tone; "but I need not your ministry. The blood I have shed, and my own, are the only sacrifices that I can offer to the Eternal."

When the trial was over, and the punishment of death had been pronounced, she sent for the painter, M. Hauer, towards whom she had frequently turned during the proceedings, thanked him for the interest he took in her fate, and offered to sit once more during the few moments she had to live. M. Hauer accepted her offer. During the sitting she conversed on indifferent subjects; she spoke also of what she had done, and gloried in having delivered France from such a monster as Marat. She entreated M. Hauer to make a small copy of her portrait, and to send it to her family.

After about an hour and a half, there was a knock at a

small door behind Charlotte Corday. It was opened, and the executioner entered. She turned round, and beholding the scissors and the red mantle, could not help showing some emotion, as she exclaimed, "What! so soon!" She immediately recovered herself, and addressing M. Hauer, "Sir," said she, "I know not how to thank you for all the interest you have shown, and the trouble you have taken, on my account; I have but this to offer you; keep it in remembrance of me." So saying, she took the scissors from the hand of the executioner, cut off a large lock of her hair which fell from her cap, and handed it to M. Hauer. The gendarmes, and even the executioner, seemed affected at the scene.

The executioner then tied her hands, and put on her the fatal garment. "This," said she, with a smile, "is the toilet of death, prepared by rather rough hands; but it leads to immortality." She picked up her long hair, looked at it once more, and gave it to Madam Richard. Just as she ascended the cart to go to the place of execution, a violent storm arose and burst forth over Paris. The lightning and rain dispersed the immense crowds that filled the bridges, streets, and squares through which the procession was to pass. Bands of desperate women pursued her with their maledictions; but, insensible to the outrage, she looked calmly down upon the people with an eye of pity.

The sky cleared up again. Her garments, drenched with rain, showed more plainly the graceful form of her body, like that of a woman rising from her bath. Her hands tied behind her back caused her to carry her head erect; this constraint of the muscles gave her the attitude of a graceful statue. The setting sun shone like a glory round her brow. The color of her cheeks, heightened by the reflection of her red mantle, imparted a dazzling

splendor to her countenance. Robespierre, Danton, and Camille Desmoulins, had placed themselves on the road to see her pass. All those who felt a presentiment of assassination were curious to study in her features the expression of that fanaticism which might threaten their lives on the morrow. She seemed occasionally to seek among the assembled thousands for a look of intelligence. Adam Lux was awaiting the cart at the entrance of the Rue Saint-Honoré; he piously followed the wheels as far as the foot of the scaffold.

"He engraved in his heart," he said, "her angelic meekness. Amid the barbarous howlings of the crowd, the mild expression of her beautiful eyes revealed her tender yet intrepid soul,— those charming eyes that would have moved a rock! * * * Let the place of her execution be holy ground, and let a statue be erected to her, with these words: *Greater than Brutus.* To die for her, and, like her, to be beaten by the hand of the executioner, to feel, in dying, the same edge that cut off the angelic head of Charlotte, and to be united to her in heroism, liberty, love, and death, is henceforth my only prayer. I shall never attain her sublime virtue; but is it not just that the object adored should ever be superior to the worshipper?"

Thus an enthusiastic and immaterial love, inspired by the last glance of the victim, accompanying her, step by step, as far as the scaffold, and unknown to her, was ready to follow her in order to merit, by her example, the eternal union of souls. The cart at length stopped. Charlotte turned pale on beholding the instrument of death, but, soon recovering her natural color, she ascended the slippery steps of the scaffold, with as firm and light a step as her handcuffs and dripping mantle permitted. When the executioner, in order to lay bare her neck, removed

the handkerchief which covered her bosom, her humiliated modesty gave her more pain than her approaching death; but resuming her serenity, and as if joyfully launching into eternity, she placed her neck herself under the hatchet. Her head flew off and rebounded. One of the executioner's assistants took the head in one hand and slapped the face with the other, vilely courting the approbation of the people! We are told that Charlotte's cheeks blushed at the outrage, as if dignity and modesty had, for a moment, survived the sentiment of life. The angry crowd did not accept the homage. A shudder of horror pervaded the multitude and demanded vengeance for the indignity.

Such was the end of Marat, and such the life and death of Charlotte Corday.

The culpable devotion of Charlotte Corday is one of those acts which we should doubt whether to admire or abhor, did not morality reprove them. For our part, if we had to find for that sublime deliverer of her country, and that glorious murderess of tyranny, a name that contained at once the enthusiasm of our emotions for her and the severity of our judgment on her act, we would create a word to unite the two extremes of admiration and horror in the language of men, and we would call her the "Angel of Assassination."

A few days after her execution, Adam Lux published an apology of Charlotte Corday, and participated in her offence in order to share her martyrdom. Being arrested for this audacious provocation, he was cast into the Abbaye. "So, then, I shall die for her!" cried he, as he passed over the threshold of the prison. And he died accordingly, soon after, hailing the scaffold consecrated by the blood of Charlotte, as the altar of love and liberty.

On hearing, in his prison, of the crime, condemnation, and death of Charlotte Corday, Verginaud exclaimed, "She kills us, but she teaches us how to die!"

JOANNA SOUTHCOTT.

JOANNA SOUTHCOTT;

THE ENGLISH PROPHETESS.

THE imposition so long and so successfully practised by Joanna Southcott, is a painful instance of credulity. Her partizans gave full credence to the assertions which she made with so much indelicate effrontery, and even after she had outlived the period assigned by herself for testing the truth of her assertions, still believed in them. Death, which dispels most illusions, did not dispel theirs; they still defended her tenets, asserted her words to be truths, inscribed her monument with the record of their faith, and the last remnants of the sect still venerate the pseudo-prophetess.

Joanna Southcott was born at Gettisham, a small village in Devonshire, in the month of April, 1750, and was baptized on the sixth of June following, as appears by the registry of baptisms at the parish church of St. Mary Ottery, in Devonshire. She was the daughter of William and Hannah Southcott, who were both members of the Established Church, and occupied themselves in farming.

From an early age Joanna had been a diligent reader of the Scriptures, and was so very enthusiastic in her studies as to become remarkable for it when a mere child. This strong religious bias "grew with her growth and strengthened with her strength," and as she increased in years

took almost entire possession of her mind. Like most young women, she had her admirers, and among them was one Noah Williams, for whom she confesses to have felt an attachment, and who was ardently attached to her, but whom she discarded as she did all others. In the year 1790, she was employed as a work-woman at an upholsterer's shop in Exeter. The shopkeeper being a Methodist, his shop was frequently visited by ministers of the same persuasion, and Joanna Southcott possessing what they termed a *serious turn of mind*, did not pass unnoticed. She had frequent discussions with these ministers, and was by them and others regarded as a prodigy. A magnified sense of her own importance and superiority constantly occupying her mind naturally produced dreams, which she considered as spiritual communications; and these extraordinary visions continuing, she began to think herself *inspired*. She bade adieu to the shop, and assumed the character of a prophetess. She declared that she was visited by the Lord, who promised to enter into an everlasting covenant with her. The Methodist preachers already adverted to endeavored to convince her of the evil nature of her inspirations, and attributed their origin to Satan himself; but Joanna had learned to think more highly of herself than of them, and continued firm in her own belief.

She began her impositions in 1792, by declaring herself to be the woman spoken of in the Revelations as "the bride," "the Lamb's wife," and "the woman clothed with the sun." This announcement was first made at Exeter, and attracted great attention. She addressed letters to the clerical dignitaries of the town and to other persons occupying respectable positions, but received no satisfactory response or sanction from any one of them, except the Rev. Mr. Pomeroy, during the eight years next

succeeding. In 1801, she published her first book, "The Strange Effects of Faith." The only *effect* of the publication was to bring to Exeter five gentlemen, three of whom were clergymen, from different parts of the kingdom, to investigate her pretensions. At the expiration of ten days, the clergymen declared that they were satisfied that her mission was divine.

Two years afterwards, they, with many others, visited London, for her doctrines had been widely disseminated, and publicly "tried" the truth of her mission. For the third time a better organized and larger meeting was held, and Joanna again triumphed, — a paper being signed to that effect by all present.

Thus fortified, Joanna issued the following document, in which she boldly set forth her pretensions: —

"I, Joanna Southcott, am clearly convinced that my calling is of God, and my writings are indited by his Spirit, as it is impossible for any spirit but an all-wise God, that is wondrous in working, wondrous in wisdom, wondrous in power, wondrous in truth, could have brought round such mysteries, so full of truth, as is in my writings; so I am clear in whom I have believed, that all my writings came from the Spirit of the most high God.

"JOANNA SOUTHCOTT."

This document was signed in the presence of fifty-eight persons, including the Methodist preachers present, who all assented to the truth of the statement.

From this time her converts rapidly increased, and she visited in her missionary capacity Bristol, Leeds, Stockport, and other large towns, where she obtained many adherents. Among the number was William Sharp, the celebrated engraver, who was a man prone to mystical

imaginings, and easily deceived by religious impostors. He became so completely enamoured of Joanna and her pretensions, that he brought her from Exeter to London, took lodgings for her, and maintained her for some time. He to the last firmly believed that she was inspired. It is no wonder that, indulging as he did in such vagaries, he died poor.

Among the directions for her conduct which the Spirit, according to Joanna's belief, had given her, was an order to Seal the Faithful to the number of one hundred and forty-four thousand, previous to the Millennium, which she declared to be rapidly approaching. The story of the discovery of this famous seal is variously told. Some affirm that she found it in sweeping out her master's shop at Exeter. Others say that she obtained it in sweeping her own house, where she carelessly threw it into a box, and that when she was ordered by the Spirit to *seal* the people, having no seal for the purpose, the Spirit told her, in the Devonshire dialect, that she would find one in the *skivet* of her box; whereupon she opened the box and found the seal above mentioned, and on looking at it found engraved upon it I. C., with two stars, the explanation of which she says was given her by the Spirit; that is, I stands for Jesus and Joanna, the C for Christ, and the two stars for the morning and evening stars, Jesus being the morning, and Joanna the evening star.

A manuscript note of the late Mr. George Smeeton, hitherto unpublished, gives the following curious history of this seal. He says: "Mr. Samuel Rousseau, author of a 'Grammar of the Persian Language,' and other works, told me that this famous mystical seal was found in a dust heap near Clerkenwell, in the neighborhood of which he was then living, and was brought to him for inspection; that he jocularly commented upon it to the

bearer, telling him it would do for Joanna Southcott, and that it was a mystical seal. The poor creature believed him, and presented it to Joanna, he being one of her followers. From this identical seal twenty thousand *passports to heaven* were sealed, varying in price from one shilling to twelve. So much for enlightened England!"

This sealing of the elect was thus performed. Upon a sheet of paper was written, within a mystical circle about six inches in diameter, the following words, commencing with the name of the disciple:—

R. N****,
The sealed of the Lord — the Elect precious,
Man's Redemption, to Inherit the
Tree of Life.
To be made Heirs of God, and Joint heirs
with Jesus Christ.

This was dated on the day of its delivery, and signed by Joanna herself.

The paper was then folded up, and the impression of Joanna's seal made on the outside in wax. When any person was to be sealed, he subscribed his name to a list provided for the purpose; this was called signing for Satan's destruction, as he thereby signified his wish that Satan might soon be destroyed, that is, banished from the earth. The new name being thus added to the list, was copied thence into the paper which recorded the sealing; which, after being written out fairly and signed by the Prophetess, was carefully folded, and sealed with her seal, with the injunction "not to be broke open," written on the outside. It was then delivered into the hands of the party whose name it bore, and he was thereupon considered as *sealed*.

The price of this sealing was originally one guinea, but it

was subsequently reduced to twelve shillings, and less, as the applications became numerous. The number of the *sealed* is estimated to have amounted to upwards of six thousand four hundred. A melancholy list of dupes, and a still more melancholy subject for contemplation. Each of these persons believed the sealed paper to be *a certain salvation;* and the wicked folly of disseminating these things continued until 1808, when, for some unexplained reason, the sealing was suddenly stopped.

Joanna continued her visionary rhapsodies, and occasionally preached to the assembled people. She was uniformly dressed in a plain quaker-like style, in a gown of callimanco, and wore a shawl and bonnet of a drab color. She was a coarse, common-place looking woman, of considerable corpulency. She would occasionally address the people in the open air, her stronghold being in Southwark, where her chapel was located. It had on its front, in very large characters, "The house of God," and was situated a few doors south of the old Elephant and Castle, and opposite the Fishmonger's Almshouses. The three leading preachers here, were a Mr. Carpenter, who afterwards seceded from his mistress, and, with a young man, saw visions on his own account, a Mr. S. P. Foley (said to be a relation of Lord Foley), and a Mr. Tozer, who was a lath-render in the London Road, adjacent, and who, with the rest, had no other ordination than that given by the Spirit through Joanna. The square block of houses among which this chapel stood was bequeathed in the reign of Elizabeth for the support of ten aged widows. When the estate was re-leased, the parish officers pulled down this chapel, and reconstructed the other houses, and inserted in the new leases a clause providing that if any tenant should affix on any part of the

front of his premises the words, "House of God!" his lease should immediately become forfeited.

In 1803, Joanna published some remarks on the Church of England Prayers, which, as she declared, were dictated by the Holy Spirit, as all her other writings were affirmed to be. To this was prefixed an introduction, written by her enthusiastic admirer Sharp, the engraver, in which he states his belief in the redemption of mankind by her agency, and that she is *the woman* named in the twelfth chapter of the Book of Revelations; and that in consequence of the purity of her church prayers, England would be the first country redeemed; and subsequently, the whole world, through the influence of her writings.

Joanna was, for some years, stationary in London. She had chapels in Southwark, Spitalfields, Greenwich, Twickenham, and Gravesend, and all her prophecies were carefully committed to paper. In the *Times* of the twenty-eighth of October, 1813, she inserted a letter of warning to the English nation, and a challenge to the Bishops and Clergy of the Church of England, and all who disbelieved in her mission. These warnings were contained in her "Book of Wonders," sent, as she was "ordered by the Spirit," to the Prince Regent, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishops of Worcester, Salisbury, and London, the Duke of Gloster, Lord Grosvenor, Lord Ellenborough, and the Recorder of London. In the third "Book of Wonders" was announced "the coming of Shiloh, with a call to the Hebrews," and the climax of Joanna's madness was reached.

This unfortunate religious enthusiast had so far wrought on her own mind, that she believed Christ was to be born again under the name of Shiloh, and that she, at the age of sixty-five, was to be the mother. The madness of herself and her votaries, acting and reacting on each

other, had taught them to assert and believe this monstrous and wicked absurdity. It would be doing violence to decency to repeat the descriptions of her miraculous conception which her followers had the audacity to promulgate, or to give in her own words her description of her pregnancy; suffice it to say, that her followers firmly believed in the truth of the assertion that the Spirit said to her, "This year, in the sixty-fifth year of thy age, thou shalt have a son by the power of the Most High; which, if they (the Hebrews) receive as their prophet, priest, and king, then I will restore them to their own land, and cast out the heathen for their sakes, as I cast out them when they cast out me, by rejecting me as their Savior, Prince and King, for which I said I was born, but not at that time to establish my kingdom."

The mad enthusiasm of Joanna's followers rapidly advanced. In town and country all sorts of contributions and necessary preparations for her *accouchement* were made. She was literally overwhelmed with presents, and a costly cradle was provided for the eagerly expected child.

A book was kept in which all these "free-will offerings to Shiloh" were entered as they were received. After her decease this was, with her will, deposited in the Registry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury. It is amusing to look over the list of offerings. Some were of considerable value; some but trifling "mementos of love;" some were gifts of clothing; others of money; others of a very nondescript kind, such as Mrs. Harwood's gift of "a silver barrel," or Alfred Goldsmith's of "a pretty sixpence." The quantity of caps given was enormous, while robes, pinafores, shoes, of satin and worsted, flannel shirts, napkins, blankets, etc., swell the list to a large amount; silver spoons, pap-boats, mugs,

corals, as well as silver teapots, sugar basins, tongs, and "odds-and-ends" of all kinds, complete this record of fanatical credulity.

The absurdity of all this was severely commented upon both in England and on the Continent. Yet there were not wanting persons among the medical profession, sufficiently credulous to uphold her fancies or deception. A letter was published by Dr. Reece, in which he stated that he had visited her and ascertained by personal examination that she was undoubtedly pregnant, that he had assured himself of her age, and that, without binding himself to her tenets or her assertions, he considered himself "satisfied" that she might give birth to a child.

As if to silence all objection, and to remove all doubts as to the truth of her assertion, an advertisement appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* of Thursday, September 22d, 1814, and also in the *Courier* of Friday, 23d, in which she declared that, in consequence of the malicious and false reports circulated, she was desirous of treating for "a spacious and ready-furnished house to be hired for three months, in which her *accouchement* may take place, in the presence of such competent witnesses as shall be appointed by proper authority to prove her character to the world." On Sunday, August 23d, all the chapels of her sect were closed, so to remain until the birth of the child; and her principal chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Tozer, announced that that event would be accompanied by supernatural signs, sufficient to convince the most sceptical, and that then would the Millennium commence.

But the appointed day passed over, and, of course, no birth took place; yet her votaries battled manfully in her defence, obstinately persisting that the child would speedily be born, until death dropped the curtain on this miserable farce. Joanna expired in Manchester Street, Man-

chester Square on the twenty-seventh of December of the same year. The news of her death was, for a time, scarcely credited by her followers; and the final conviction of its truth was modified by an unwavering faith that she would soon rise from the dead and complete her divine mission on earth. She was buried in the ground attached to St. John's Wood Chapel, where lies another religious impostor,—"the prophet Richard Brothers."

The failure of her prophecies had, however, no effect in opening the eyes of her deluded votaries. On one occasion she prognosticated the death of her own father at a stated period,—in doing which she stood a fair chance of being right, as he was then above seventy years of age, and his death daily expected,—but he long survived the appointed period; yet the reputation of "the prophetess" suffered no detriment in the estimation of her followers. On another occasion, to confirm her disciples, she announced that on a certain day she would perform a miracle by raising a corpse to life. The Devil, however, in the shape of Wortley, an officer of the Union Hall Office, interposed and spoiled the effect, by proposing that the dead man should first be stabbed with a dagger. The *corpse*, not liking such a process, got up and ran away, to the great astonishment of the congregation. In some instances the zeal of Joanna's followers outran her own discretion, and led them into vagaries which she did not always countenance or command; yet such was the natural result of her own example.

The implicit faith which her followers reposed in her predictions may be illustrated by one instance among many. Edward Penny, a farmer residing at Inglebourn, near Totness, Devon, became so convinced of the truth of her prediction that in the ensuing year there would be no harvest, as the world would be destroyed before the period

for gathering the corn had arrived, that he determined to save his seed-wheat and let all his land lie idle. The harvest time came, but the world went on as before; and when rent-day came, having no other way of meeting the demand, he was obliged to part with a portion of his property to pay the rent of the farm he had so foolishly neglected. He never recovered from the blow, but sank gradually in the world until he was obliged to seek parochial aid, and died miserably poor.

In London, the believers in Joanna Southcott's mission are rapidly becoming extinct. But no longer time ago than September, 1838, some of them were summoned to Union Hall, for exciting a disturbance in the streets by the exhibition of banners and mystical emblems, and the public preaching of her doctrine; and in May, 1835, an advertisement to the following effect appeared in the papers: "The followers of Joanna Southcott and her son Shiloh, are informed that a very valuable manuscript, giving an account of the Divine Mission of Shiloh, his works and miracles, which have taken place since the death of Joanna Southcott, will be published in Numbers, at one shilling each." In 1840, another advertisement announced that the manuscript of her original prophecies was to be sold complete, "in excellent preservation." Some few of her followers still linger about the neighborhood of Walworth; and it is but a short time since a petition for the destruction of the Devil lay for signature at a rag-shop in that locality, thus keeping alive one of the prominent articles in her creed and teachings.

That Joanna was an unfortunate lunatic there can be no doubt, her lunacy being the result of misdirected study and enthusiasm acting on a weak and easily excited brain. That some of her more immediate followers availed themselves of her peculiarities, and the influence she possessed

over the masses, to put money in their own purses, there can be, also, no doubt. What their religious tenets were, cannot be clearly ascertained from the published or spoken rhapsodies of the prophetess or her sect; the probability is that they did not themselves distinctly comprehend them. Although occurring in the nineteenth century, and in the very centre of one of the most civilized of European nations, their errors and actions, as exhibited to the world, equal in absurdity any which were enacted in what we term "the dark ages." The review of them should warn us of this day and generation against condemning too harshly the credulity of our ancestors, and teach us the danger of disregarding the well-defined rules of true religious government.

JEMIMAH WILKINSON.

JEMIMAH WILKINSON;

THE AMERICAN PROPHETESS.

THE subject of this sketch received her being in the State of Rhode Island, about 1756, while the country remained a British province.

The Puritans, who first set foot on the Plymouth rock in the reign of Charles the First, and their descendants, who inhabited the country a hundred years afterwards, were not to be distinguished by a single moral or religious peculiarity. While the revolutions of Europe in church and state were presenting new phases of society, and bringing out new developments of civilization, puritan New England, in its religion and morals, stood still for more than a century. Were the pilgrim fathers uncompromising zealots, ultra Calvinists, rigid disciplinarians, and intolerant bigots? So were their great-grand-children at the time Jemimah Wilkinson sprang up among them. It presents, then, a curious inquiry to the speculative philosopher, how, in such a community of staid habits and immutable religion, a false prophetess could rise up among them with any chance of success.

The parents of Jemimah were not above the common yeomanry of the country, except that her father was a ruling elder in the church. Her grandfather had been more distinguished. He had sat in the first council of the

colony, when and where, on account of its being seed-time, the members being anxious to be at home on their farms, they gravely resolved to adopt the laws of God for the government of the colony, until they should have time to meet together and make *better*.

Jemimah inherited the native talents of the whole stock; and it may be inferred, from her subsequent career, that her education was superior to that which fell to the common lot of New England females at that period. From the living chroniclers of the place, the writer of this sketch has not been able to gather anything important of her early history, before she reached the age of twenty-four years, except that she was very grave, contemplative, and somewhat eccentric.

There is a certain epoch in the history of all prophets, whether true or false, from which they date their commission; when, either by a vision, the ministration of angels, a journey to heaven, or by the voice of God himself, the inspired one receives, or pretends to have received, the divine afflatus, by which he is qualified to open his authoritative message to the world. If the lips of Isaiah were touched with hallowed fire from off the altar, if Mahomet was caught up into the country of Cherubim, so Jemimah Wilkinson, late of Rhode Island, spinster, at the age of twenty-four, met the Almighty in a trance, as she ever after boldly affirmed, and received a commission at His hands. The circumstances of this event are too important in the history of the prophetess to be passed unnoticed, and must, therefore, here appear in their order.

It occurred about 1780, when our heroine was of the age above stated, that, after a few days' slight illness, she fell into an unusual syncope, presenting more the pallid lineaments of death than any state of disease known to physiology. Her eyes remained partially open, fixed on

vacancy, or, rather, apparently gazing on some terrible object; pulsation had ceased; the silver cord seemed loosed; the wheels of life stood still; and nothing indicative of vitality remained but a slight warmth in the region of the heart. In this condition she had remained for two days and two nights, when her medical attendants, having exhausted their skill in efforts at resuscitation, pronounced her to be dead; and the agonized family, no longer held in suspense, now found a definite object for their grief, as they poured out their tears for their beloved and lost one. It was the custom of the country to bury the dead on the next day after the decease. No invitation was extended to particular friends to be in attendance. The corpse was removed to the parish meeting-house, where a promiscuous congregation assembled with the minister; singing, prayer, and a funeral sermon followed, when the whole congregation marched in procession to the place of sepulture. Accordingly, the next day was fixed for the funeral of Jemimah Wilkinson. When it arrived, an immense concourse of people was on the spot, drawn there as well by the popularity of the deceased as by a laudable curiosity to learn more of the singular circumstances attending her exit. The family appeared in decent mourning; the coffin was placed on the altar, in front of the pulpit; the preacher had ascended the holy place, and was in profound meditation, preparatory to the solemn service which devolved upon him. The assembled people, in sympathy with the scene before them, and feeling that they were in the house of mourning, were hushed to silence; when, of a sudden, and to the astonishment of all present, three distinct raps, coming forth from the narrow house of the dead, sounded through the aisles, and echoed from the vaulted ceiling of the church. This was succeeded by a silence still more profound. Not a limb

was moved nor a whisper breathed; the awe-stricken Puritans sat in solemn amazement, as if the day of judgment had arrived, and the voice of the last trumpet had just sounded in their ears. In the midst of this silence, and while every eye was turned toward the altar, the short lid at the head of the coffin was thrown back, and the pale hand of Jemimah Wilkinson was extended upwards, as if in the effort of rising. In a moment, the pious divine and family physician were at her side. The lower lid was stricken off; aid was given to her efforts, and she sat up in her grave-clothes in the midst of the amazed congregation. After a short pause, the prophetess opened her lips in faint words, which were rendered audible only by the breathless silence which otherwise prevailed. She declared that her former self had died, and passed into the land of spirits; that this, which they now saw, was her resurrection and spiritual body, redeemed from corruption by the power of God, that she might come back to earth, as a new proof of the resurrection of the dead; that, while absent from the body, she had received a commission from the Holy One, investing her with the power of Jesus Christ until his second coming to judge the world; that she had authority to raise up a holy and elect church on the earth, who should share with her in the first resurrection, and be present to witness her equal glory with Christ when he should descend in the clouds of heaven. It may well be supposed that this astounding announcement, made under circumstances thus extraordinary, was not without its effect upon a multitude so disposed to the marvellous, from their sympathy in the scene. Its ultimate influence upon the surrounding neighborhood will by-and-by more fully appear. Various opinions have been entertained by the philosophic and incredulous in the neighborhood, as to the true character of this extraordinary vision. Some

very good men have supposed that the Almighty, whose power over the invisible world is as absolute as over the material universe, did, indeed, in this instance, employ a spiritual agency to effect some good purpose; but that, through the weakness of the erring creature, what was intended for salvation was perverted, and made the occasion of the wildest fanaticism. To support this notion, her former piety and the otherwise inexplicable features of the case are referred to.

Others have supposed that the melancholic subject of the vision was predisposed to swooning or fainting fits, in which, while the other powers of mind and body were suspended, the imagination, as in case of a dream, was left free to wander over heaven, earth, and hell; and that her previous sublimated piety gave direction to her fancy, and led her thoughts up to the temple and throne of God, where she verily *supposed* she heard the announcement, and received the commission, which she afterwards made known. This notion finds corroboration in the apparent sincerity of her after life. If correct, it presents a notable case of self-deception.

Others, again, have resolved the whole matter into a systematic scheme for personal aggrandizement, power, and wealth, by which its authoress became the founder of a sect, the leader of a party, and the oracle of her devoted followers. This explanation, though less charitable than the others, and scarcely reconcilable with her former piety and the wonderful phenomenon of the trance, is, nevertheless, more in accordance with her future developments.

It is said, that "a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country;" but it must be conceded to Jemimah Wilkinson, that even there, and among her own kinsmen, her mission was honored by scores of proselytes. Her father's family and immediate kinsfolk, who best knew her

moral character, and who were eye-witnesses of her trance, were the first to seal their testimony to the truth of her doctrines by unreserved discipleship.

She soon established regular meetings, where the people flocked in multitudes; some to gratify an awakened curiosity, others to wait on her ministrations with a profound conviction of their truth. Some, who were present on such occasions, and who were by no means favorable to her pretensions, have assured me, that so much evangelical truth was mixed up with her statements, so original were her conceptions, so vivid her imagination, so sublimated her piety, and pathetic her appeals, that it was not strange that the unlettered mind was warped from the common faith, and that hundreds rallied around her standard, to go up with her to possess the goodly land. The company of the *faithful* in her native state, already numbered some hundreds. That it was not quadrupled, was owing, undoubtedly, to the impolitic adoption of an unnatural rule for the government of her flock; namely, that they should "neither marry nor be given in marriage; and that those who had wives, should become as those who had none."

Religionists of all ages have been tinctured with this folly. It was the foundation of the monastic orders. Its requirement, by the popes, of the clergy of Britain, furnished matter of contention for many centuries. The stalwart Saxon, in whom the voice of nature was too potent for such *single* spirituality, resisting unto bonds and imprisonment, raised up a standard against papal domination, which was only confirmed and established in the reformation of Luther. Founders of sects, therefore, who incorporate this element into their systems, however they may prosper for a season, will find in the end that nature will resent such a prohibition in her empire; her voice will

be heard, her laws will prevail, to the subversion and overthrow of every celibate hierarchy.

Another element adopted in Jemimah's system was conceived in more wisdom. Though at war with the conventional usages of society, it outraged no law of nature; and, addressing itself to the indigent and hungry, it operated as a foil to the other objectionable feature, by drawing in the poor, the maimed, the halt, the deaf, and blind, to the place of bread and equal enjoyments. This item was no other than that adopted by the first disciples of Jesus, after the Holy Ghost had fallen on them at Pentecost, when, "neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." Another principle adopted and acted on in this new system was, to collect and adopt, as constituent parts of their community, all the orphans, foundlings, and poor children, within reach of their operations; thereby, in a manner, supplying the defects of the other part of the system, that the society of the faithful should not ultimately become extinct. These two last mentioned elements, though wisely contrived to increase the numbers of the sect, could not fail, in their practical working, to increase poverty in the same proportion. This was soon felt to the heart of the community. Jemimah could shower down the spiritual bread, such as it was, in profuse abundance, which she never failed to do at their solemn convocations; but still, these etherial minded disciples were constantly reminded that they were still in the body, by the cravings of unsatiated appetites, and the shivering of their uncovered limbs. This was a matter to be looked into. Rhode Island, as a country, was a poverty-stricken region; the land cold and hungry, the climate bleak and unpropitious.

Matters for the society were getting worse and worse.

What was to be done? In this emergency the prophetess applied to the divinity *that was within her*, and the answer returned was, "Thou shalt go out into a strange country, and to a people of strange language: but fear not; for lo! the angel of his presence [alias, Jemimah Wilkinson] shall go with thee. He shall lead thee; and the Shechinah [that is, Jemimah] shall be thy rearward!"

About this period, the celebrated Oliver Phelps had effected his treaty with the Seneca Indians, by which an extensive territory of Western New York was ceded to him and his heirs forever. This purchase was seventy miles in breadth, and an hundred in length; bounded on the north by Lake Ontario, east by Cayuga lake, south by Pennsylvania and the spurs of the Alleghany mountains, and west by the Genesee river. At *this* period, it is one of the most populous and highly cultivated portions of the Union; and, having respect to luxuriousness of soil, abounding wealth, hydraulic erections, clustering cities, towns, and villages, convenience to market, and other elements of perpetual prosperity, all travellers who have visited the spot will agree in saying that it is the garden of the New World.

At the time of which we write, when the prophetess received her direction to go to a strange country, this was, indeed, a strange and unknown land to the *settled* portion of America, lying far beyond the western limits of civilization. The sound of the axe had never been heard in its ancient forests, nor had the foot of the most adventurous pioneer pressed its soil. It was, indeed, the habitation of a people of strange language. To this country, then, when in the condition just described, Jemimah Wilkinson emigrated with her followers, — performing a journey of five hundred miles, mostly through the forests, destitute of highways, — to plant her colony in a more congenial soil,

and develop her doctrines on a wider theatre. Though the savage tribes had conveyed by treaty the greater part of the territory, yet, as the process of *settling* by the whites would occupy many years, those stalwart foresters, the ancient proprietors of the land, still lingered around the graves of their forefathers, as if in no haste to break communion with their hallowed manes, which they believed to people the air, and "walk the earth unseen, both when they waked and when they slept," warning them of approaching danger, and becoming their guardian *genii* through the vicissitudes of life. These scattered tribes, though principally inhabiting their reservations on the aforesaid territory, were not scrupulous in the matter of the chase, but promiscuously wandered over the whole country for their game; and, what was quite natural in the case, they looked with jealousy and distrust upon any encroachment on their ancient dominions; having occasion to be dissatisfied with a treaty procured by finesse, if not by fraud, by which their former hunting-ground was about to pass from them forever, their sacred spots, consecrated to the dead, to be desecrated, and the bones of their venerated chieftains to be turned up by the white man's ploughshare, to bleach in the sunbeams, or mingle with the common earth. It was, then, with no ordinary feelings of surprise, that a hunting party of these savages witnessed the arrival of the *holy band*, consisting of some hundreds, with the prophetess at their head. Runners were despatched forthwith, to notify the head men of the nation of this important event.

Jemimah had effected her purchase of land, consisting of a township of six miles square, in the very heart of this beautiful country. She named it after the holy city of Judea; calling it *Jerusalem*, because out of it was to go forth the word of life, to enlighten the surrounding

nations, pagan as well as civilized. It still retains the name bestowed upon it by the prophetess, and will be found by the traveller, about twelve miles south-west of the beautiful town of Geneva, on the west side of the Seneca lake, in the well known county of Ontario. That the reader may know with what rapidity the value of real estate is advanced in a new country by its progressive improvements, I will here state, that the worth of Jemimah's purchase at this time is not less than £400,000 sterling. Its original cost to the prophetess, as is still to be seen in the record of her deed, at Canandaigua, the capital of Ontario, was but £500.

The next difficulty to be encountered was with those turbulent neighbors, the Seneca Indians; for a settlement within their borders could not go on, at that period, unless they could be propitiated. The neglect of such a precaution has been the occasion of many a bloody massacre. Penn, with the exception of Jemimah Wilkinson, was, perhaps, the only pioneer of emigration in the new world who adopted the true policy with these unlettered children of nature. His scheme, founded on eternal justice and the pacific theory of the gospel, being practically carried out before the pagan eye, won for Christianity (exhibited in that amiable form) the profoundest reverence, even from savage breasts; while, at the same time, it secured the safety and prosperity of his band of emigrants who first peopled Philadelphia and the country around. His doings are too well known to require repetition here. They stand recorded on the enduring page of national history, and live in the veneration of his followers.

While Jemimah and her disciples were busily employed in laying out their grounds on a spot formerly occupied as an Indian village, a formidable band of the natives, who had been collected by the runners, looked in upon her,

quite unexpectedly, and to the great dismay of her lamb-like believers. The prophetess alone remained unmoved at this hostile array, — for the warriors had come well armed; rifles and long carbines trailed from their right hands; tomahawks, hatchets, and scalping-knives gleamed in the sun's rays, as they depended from their belts; the war-paint upon their faces, and eagle quills nodding on their scalp-tufts, invested them with unearthly ferocity; so that a much more valorous band than the followers of Jemimah might well have had misgivings, without subjecting themselves to the imputation of cowardice. The prophetess approached the intruders with a firm step and undaunted eye, apparelled in that unique dress which will be hereafter described. She was met, to her surprise, by a lad of white skin, who addressed her in good English. This lad was no other than Jasper Parrish, afterwards Captain Parrish, who acted as the interpreter for the United States, in their negotiations with the Indians, for forty years thereafter. Born in Pennsylvania, he was taken prisoner some years previous, in the revolutionary war, when his family were all massacred in his presence, and himself caused to run the gantlet. He came off triumphant, was adopted into an Indian family, became a favorite, finally settled in Canandaigua, became enriched by Indian munificence, filled a broad space in the good opinion of his country, and died in the bosom of civilization, and within the pale of the Christian church. This Jasper Parrish, while thus incorporated with the wandering tribes as one of their number, met the prophetess of Rhode Island, in advance of his savage companions who were drawn up in battle array. He inquired of her who she was, whence she came, who were her companions, and what was their present object. Her answer, as Parrish afterwards reported it, was as follows: — "I am the

Outbeaming of God on earth in the place of Jesus Christ, until his second coming. I came from the east, — these are the lambs of my flock, and we seek a pasture in the wilderness." The interpreter was a shrewd youth; he comprehended in a breath, as well from the vehemence and apparent sincerity of the speaker, as from her singular dress, that she was some fanatic, and conceived the thought that this could be turned to good account with the savages, whose superstitions in these matters will be hereafter described. But the young interpreter was in a sad perplexity to determine to which *sex* the "*Outbeaming*" belonged; especially as her dress was so equivocal, that it went to establish rather than resolve the doubt. As this habiliment has been once before referred to, and a description of it promised, it will not be amiss here, to describe it, premising that, to the close of her long prophetic life, its fashion was never changed. First, then, she wore neither gown nor petticoat. Her lower limbs were covered with kilts or *pantaletts*, coming down midway between the knee and ankle, made of very fine woollen cloth, of light drab color. Her hose were of linen thread, of flax color; her shoes were covered with large yellow buckles. Her tunic was like a bishop's underdress; showing a skirt opening in front, coming down midway between the waist and the knee. The outward garment, covering the bust and arms, was not unlike a riding habit, with rolling collar and wide lapels turning back upon the breast. Around her neck was a wide white ribbon, crossed in front, and pinned down upon her breast not unlike a clergyman's small linen worn in front. The material of her habit and tunic was of a piece with her kilts. Her black hair parted in front, and coming down upon her shoulders on each side, rolled up in natural curls. She wore a drab quaker-hat, with a rim not less than

eight inches wide. It may here be added that, as to her person, nature had not been stingy, either in bulk of material or symmetrical adjustment. She was considerably above the medium stature, and of large muscular development. Her eyes were coal-black, large, steady, firm; the *tout ensemble*, or entire person of Jemimah Wilkinson, taken in connection with her carriage, manners, and address, would impress the beholder with the belief that she was possessed of strong intellect, decision of character, deep sincerity, and passionate devotion.

The reader will understand from the above why young Parrish doubted as to which *sex* she belonged. Her voice furnished no better clue; in aid of nature she had made it sonorous by her *out-pourings* to her flock. This question of *sex*, which so perplexed the young interpreter, may appear to the reader to be a very trifling and unimportant matter; yet on this equivocal point depended the success of the enterprise, — the safety of the lambs of the flock, — even the life of the prophetess. A brief digression will make apparent the truth of this assertion. Indians, like Orientalists, place women low in the scale of moral being, denying to them souls and immmortality; hence they refuse them a place in the council-house, intrust them with no secrets of war, admit them to no part of religious rites, and if a woman is even suspected of divination, or having to do with invisible agencies, she is immediately put to death as a *witch*, and her children compelled to seek shelter with a foreign tribe. While, on the other hand, a *Medicine-man*, as they call an astrologer, or magician, ranks high in the nation, — wielding authority even over their chiefs, — sitting among their kings, and ruling by his counsel, as the great prophet of the tribe, in all affairs of war and state. Now, had the interpreter announced Jemimah Wilkinson to the warriors as a *woman*,

having the power of Deity, or as dealing in occult arts, her heart's blood would have been spilled before the chieftains left the spot, and the lambs of her flock have been devoured by the savage wolves of the Senecas. The matter of sex, therefore, became most important on that occasion. Parrish, who had witnessed barbarous massacres enough, was deeply anxious to prevent the butchery of these unarmed enthusiasts, and put the direct inquiry to Jemimah, whether she were man or woman? "As to that, young man," replied the prophetess, "I am neither; being the effulgence of Divinity, and at the head of a kingdom whose subjects neither marry nor are given in marriage, and where they are neither Greek nor Jew, bond nor free, male nor female, it does not behoove me to allow the distinctions of the flesh, where all are one in Christ, whose authority I now wield." This was a poser to the young interpreter. He knew not how to proceed. Jemimah, perceiving his embarrassment, added, "True, I was once known as Jemimah Wilkinson; was then a woman, and so remained, till my mortality put on immortality, and was swallowed up of spiritual life." "God be thanked for that," said Parrish; "keep the old name to yourself; and, if you were not actually changed from woman to man in the operation, let me say to the Indians that you are a man, or you'll meet with a worse change than ever came over you *down east*." A few words served to explain the Indian custom to the quick apprehension of the prophetess, who undoubtedly rejoiced in spirit that on that occasion, at least, she was delivered from the bonds of the flesh. Parrish, as master of ceremonies and chief mediator in this grave affair, left Jemimah where they had been standing, and hastened to his companions to report progress. He declared to the assembled warriors, that the great medicine-man of the pale-faces, whose myste-

rious power in divination was the admiration of his own nation, being moved with compassion for the wandering tribes, had left the place of the sun's rising, accompanied by his friends, and, after passing their boundless forests, had arrived in the heart of the Senecas, to teach them more fully of the Great Spirit, to heal their diseases, defend them from *evil ones*, and, controlling the elements of nature, to bring fruitful seasons, good fishing and hunting, and general prosperity. This announcement was received by the savages with mingled feelings of surprise, joy and doubt. They desired to approach nearer to this mysterious being, that they might better satisfy themselves, by scrutiny, as to the reality of her pretensions.

Jemimah, who was an adept in reading men's thoughts, whether savage or civilized, perceived at once that she had nothing to fear from the approach of these awe-stricken Pagans. She knew, by their very movement, that a favorable impression had already been made upon them, so that she was perfectly self-possessed, and prepared to deepen the veneration with which they approached her. As they formed a semi-circle around her, she solemnly raised her hands towards heaven, threw back her head, closed her eyes, moved her lips as if in holy communion with the Highest, while her countenance lighted up with celestial ardor, betrayed unearthly emotion, such as man might not look upon and remain unaffected. When the interest of the warriors was thus wrought up to the highest pitch of intensity, her eyes gently opened, her arms waved downwards in concentric circles as if in the act of pouring blessings on their heads, while her lips pronounced these solemn words: "May the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob pour his blessing upon you! Receive *my* blessing in the name of the Lord." This being interpreted to the Indians, they bowed themselves toward the prophetess, in

token of reverence, and silently retired. But as it is their uniform custom never to despatch any grave matter in haste, they chose not to commit themselves further in this affair until their course of procedure should be settled in general council, when their own prophet, orators, and sage men, should all be present, to act as might be required. Accordingly, runners were despatched to the Genesee reservations, to assemble a full delegation of the wise men of the tribes, at a council-fire to be held near to Jerusalem.

When the day arrived, Blue-Sky, Corn-Tassel, Red-Jacket, the most illustrious orators of the nation, together with some hundreds of chiefs and warriors, clad in all their gewgaw splendor, exhibiting the grotesque insignia of their respective tribes, appeared in the council-house, ready to hear the prophet of the pale-faces. But there was one who accompanied them, requiring a more particular description. His form was venerable, though emaciated. Time and mental cares had ploughed deep furrows in his cheeks and marked his forehead into ridges. Of his once raven locks, what remained from the bleaching of a hundred *snows* were hoary as the feathers of the swan. His form was stooping, his limbs tremulous with age, and his eyes sealed with blindness.

This was Skòs-kajēnau, the great prophet of the Senecas, before whom the chieftains bowed down and the young men hid themselves. Into this grave assembly, Jemimah Wilkinson, clad as already described, made her entrance. A wicker seat had been raised for the two prophets, while the warriors sat upon the ground below and before them. A deep silence, such as is always witnessed in the Indian council-house, pervaded the assembly for ten minutes, when the Indian prophet, above described, arose, and delivered himself as follows: "*Med-*

icine-man of the Yangees, *listen!* I am an old man: my eyes can no more look on the sun,—my tongue can speak but few words. Soon I *sleep:* who then shall teach my people? They say you come from the sun's-rising, where the shining ones talk with you. Now, we don't know. May be you be good, may be not. I, ancient prophet — seen much. Great Spirit talk to me from the cloud. I inquire after him in my dreams. Sometimes he answer in the sunshine, sometimes in the rain. Sometimes I don't know. If pale-face know more, then me listen. I have done."

This address being duly interpreted by Parrish, Jemimah felt herself called on to respond. I must not detain the reader with her entire speech. She spoke of her supernatural being and divine mission; of the success which had attended her preaching; of the love she bore to a fallen world, and especially the deep interest she felt in the welfare of the Senecas, for whom she travailed in birth, until their redemption should be brought in. Indians rarely take a vote, or resolve as to anything, immediately after listening to a speech. They will not place an important matter on the issue of excited passions. They have a maxim, which, when rendered into English, reads thus: "Grave things are to be weighed in a cool balance." Hence, on the close of Jemimah's speech, they adjourned the sitting, to deliberate on what they had heard. After due consideration, they sent a messenger, with their interpreter, to the prophetess, notifying her that it was *one* thing to speak the *great word*, but *another* thing to do the great *wizard-work;* and that, unless the *medicine-man* of the pale-faces could show them a sign, they would not believe on him.

Jemimah's wits were put to the test by this requirement. However great she might fancy her power in the invisible

and spiritual world, she felt that it was rather difficult to bring out a notable and visible miracle, to the conviction of savages, from the gross materials of nature which surrounded her. She had but short time for consideration, but despatched the messenger with answer that she would soon be with them in council. While walking her room, in some perplexity how next to proceed, dame Nature came up in aid of her *divinity*. Her eyes fell on a large magnet lying beside her compass, which articles she had brought with her from the sea-board, to aid her surveys of the new country; for, be it known to the reader, that even the supernal power of Jemimah Wilkinson did not extend to the making of straight lines and observing due courses in that extended forest, without the aid of earthly science. With the magnet concealed in her pocket, the "*out-beaming*" once more paraded through the sitting ranks of the chieftains to her wicker-chair, and took her seat beside the ancient prophet. Another silence pervaded the council-house; all eyes were fixed on the *divinity*. Jemimah arose, in that solemn and imposing manner peculiar to herself, and said, "O slow of heart to believe! I might denounce ye as that 'wicked and adulterous generation who seek a sign,' and might add, that 'no sign shall be given ye, but the sign of Jonas the prophet:' but that I may make full proof of this more merciful dispensation, and that ye may believe that I have power over nature, I propose to shake the foundation of the house where we are sitting, and level its timbers to the ground." This being interpreted, a thrill of horror and apprehension shook every warrior's nerves. They begged, through the interpreter, that a less tremendous display might be made, and they would believe. Jemimah saw that this was her time; the savages were in alarm, and hence disposed to the marvellous. She extended her hand towards the

nearest chieftain, and, in an authoritative tone, demanded his bright scalping knife which gleamed from beneath his belt. The knife was handed to her. Then, standing up, she waved her right hand, holding the magnet like an enchanter's wand, over the heads of the warriors, till, bringing the knife and loadstone in contact, the cohesion of attraction was never better illustrated. The knife, attached by its point to the loadstone, made sudden evolutions in concentric circles, as it glistened and trembled in its whirling, and yet adhered to the point of attraction. "*Hugh!*" (their exclamation of surprise,) burst from every savage bosom. In a moment, they were all upon their feet, leaning forward, in breathless silence and amazed wonder at the phenomenon before them. The blind prophet had only heard the exclamation. He inquired the cause, which being explained to him by one of the orators, he rose up, bending his sightless eye-balls towards the magic exhibition.

When the "*divinity*" had made ample exhibition of her sorcery, to the satisfaction of herself and amazement of her beholders, she gracefully drew in her arm, disposing of the magnet in her pocket, still holding the knife in her hand, and delivered herself as follows: "As you have seen the scalping-knife arrested by invisible power, and suspended on nothing, it is to admonish you that the Great Spirit wills the suspension of that bloody instrument, together with the tomahawk and rifle, in the destruction of human life; that you are to hang them up in your wigwams, and no more employ them against your white neighbors. I have come among you as the *Great-Blessing;* see that you refuse not him that speaketh from heaven!"

This interpreted, the aged prophet closed the council as follows: "Wizard of the Yangees, we bow to your supremacy. Red men have become mice; we crawl

under your feet. Once we were the wild buffalo; our heart was big; our legs long, and our horn strong. Now our heart is soft; we have become women. The Yangees of the East have slain the Pequot warriors, made the Delawares mad with fire-water; the last of the Mohigans *sleeps*. The Senecas go next. The Great Spirit talks no more with our prophets; our warriors are cowards; our wise men are confounded in their talk. By-and-by we have no deer; the tree that shades us will be dry. Yangees will burn up our wigwams, and dig up our graves. We think you a great witch.* Pale faces will hear you. When you see poor Indian fainting, will you give him bread? when the snow and frost are on his blanket, may he come to your fire? Now we go home; we hang up the scalping-knife at your *great word;* we fight no more; we be good friends: good-bye." At these words the council broke up; the natives retired profoundly reverencing the *medicine-man* of the Yangees; and from that hour to the day of her death, Jemimah Wilkinson exercised a controlling influence over all the Seneca nation, who regarded her as a being having power over nature, and divine agency in the invisible world. This homage was not limited to profession merely; it was manifested in offerings and propitiatory presents of furs, venison, and other acceptable things, at every full moon, for many years thereafter. And, in justice to Jemimah be it recorded, that no undue advantage of that influence was ever taken by her; but, on the contrary, she proved herself the Indian's friend through good report and evil report. Her doors were ever open to these houseless wanderers, and her board spread for their wants. That thousands of them did not become her constant disciples was owing, not to a want

* Not that the Indians suspected Jemimah to be a woman. "Witch" is a generic term for sorcerer, without distinction of sex.

of kindness on her part, or veneration on theirs, but to that fugitive, vagabond habit, instinctive to all the Indian race, which renders all efforts at civilizing them unavailing and abortive.

The settlement of Jemimah at Jerusalem was immediately succeeded by a vast influx of emigrants from New England, pouring in month after month, and year after year, like wave succeeding wave, to obtain a footing in the Genesee country, which was justly considered the garden of America. This brought around the prophetess too stubborn a material to be worked up into her spiritual edifice, as all who philosophize upon the subject will at once perceive.

It is a mistaken notion that the pioneers of a new country, especially a country of great productiveness, are boorish, illiterate men. The next generation may become so, by a neglect of schools, churches, and other institutions of moral culture and mental training; but the first adventurers are generally bold, enterprising, persevering men, who think and act for themselves, and to the best advantage. Such were the first settlers of Ontario county. Besides, their time was too much occupied in felling the trees, clearing and fencing land, and obtaining bread for the body, to bestow much attention upon etherial and spiritual matters. Add to this, populous villages, such as Canandaigua, Geneva, Pennyan, et-cetera, were springing up in the immediate neighborhood of Jerusalem, where the literature of the day, newspapers, books, clergymen, lawyers, and scholars soon found their way.

All these causes combined, operated to suspend the spiritual advancement of the new sect, and to limit the *outpourings* to the established in the faith. Even this was not without its advantages: it enabled the *elect* to extend their improvements, beautify and adorn their village, introduce

the mechanic arts, erect mills and manufactories; so that if they were not gathering materials for their moonshine kingdom in the clouds, they were more profitably advancing their interests in the world *that now is*. The result of this thrifty economy was, that in a few years, the same community who wandered off from Rhode Island in destitution and in rags, now excited the envy of the surrounding country by their superior wealth and eligible situation. A country squire, by the name of Potter, residing in the neighborhood, who had recently been raised to the bench of common pleas as one of the judges of Ontario county, having squandered his time and fortune in politics, was about this time looking around him for the means of getting up in the world. He selected Jemimah's establishment as the theatre of his operations. With this view he appeared among her worshippers on their Lord's-day meetings, first as a spectator, then as a penitent, and finally, as a convert and member in full fellowship. Jemimah *rejoiced in spirit* at this honorable acquisition, naturally concluding that so influential a disciple as Judge Potter would induce many others into her fold; but she soon found that she had caught a Tartar; — a wolf had come among the *lambs* of the flock. Potter ingratiated himself with the "*divinity*," became her confidential adviser in worldly matters, and her private secretary. He soon brought his wits to bear upon the old, illiterate, and feeble-minded of the community, and, by what pretence I have never known, obtained releases from many of them of their rights as tenants in common in the whole township.

This township of six miles square, contained no less than twenty-three thousand and forty acres of land; which, at the time of Potter's speculation, was worth ninety-thousand pounds sterling. It was therefore quite a scheme at money-making, to secure the title to some third

part of these rights. It was but a short time, however, before the prophetess, who kept herself well informed as to the doings of her flock, came to be advised of all the particulars of the transaction. Meeting with her secretary, she mildly rebuked him for his worldly-mindedness, and expressed a hope, that for the honor of the cause in which he had so devoutly embarked, he would return the *worldly* papers in his possession to the infirm old people from whom he had obtained them. Potter, feeling that his designs were accomplished, concluded that a crouching policy was no longer necessary. He came out boldly to his "*divine*" mistress, accusing her of hypocrisy and blasphemy, threatening the penalties of the law upon her, if she interfered in the least with the contracts he had made. This was bold language to Deity's vicegerent, — such as Jemimah had never yet heard from the mouth of a disciple, — such as none but a mind well balanced, and feelings well disciplined, could endure in silence.

She made no reply; but retiring to her *sanctum sanctorum*, she rang for her page, who alone was admitted into that sacred retreat. What orders she issued, Potter knew not, except from the fact, that four robust disciples immediately entered the room where he was, seized him by the arms and legs, and without a word spoken, hurried him out of the house, across the improved land, and so through the forest, till he was fairly off the premises claimed by the elect church. On putting him upon his feet, beyond the limits of their township, his bearers cautioned him, by the authority of the "*vicegerent*," and on peril of his life, never to set foot on the consecrated premises.

Potter knew too well the unbending character of Jemimah, and that her authority was backed up by two hundred men who were subservient to her nod, to treat with

indifference the admonition he had received. He consoled himself, however, with the thought, that the papers were in his pocket, and the law open for his remedy. And to law he went: first, by obtaining an indictment against the *elect-lady* for blasphemy, and then by instituting ejectment-suits, to oust the infirm ones who had so improvidently re-leased to him. The blasphemy case first came on for trial. Great interest was excited throughout the West. The court-house was filled with the wonder-loving multitude. The prophetess declined employing counsel, contending in her defence that the temporal courts had no jurisdiction over the person of the Lord's anointed. This plea being overruled by the court, the attorney-general went on with his statements and proofs. It appeared, indisputably, that the defendant had arrogated divine power to herself; and this was alleged to fall within the definition of blasphemy. It now became Jemimah's turn to speak. She arose with the dignity of an empress. The buzzing multitude was hushed to silence. She observed that her kingdom was not of this world, — hence she should despatch the temporal matters now before the court, in a single sentence, and hasten to something more important. If, as was alleged, her doctrines were blasphemous, then was the complainant, who was the principal witness, a blasphemer, and therefore not a competent witness; "for," said she, "Judge Potter, on whose testimony the prosecution is founded, has subscribed to all my doctrines, and has made no renunciation of his faith." She then assumed a new attitude, lifted up her hands and eyes toward heaven, and poured out a most fervent and passionate ejaculation to her Father in heaven, that the Holy Ghost might descend upon the present audience, and penetrate their hearts with an awful sense of that approaching tribunal, before whom judges

and jury, witnesses and spectators, the rich man and Lazarus, must shortly appear, to render an account for the deeds done in the body. Then, assuming an oratorical attitude, she continued with an exhortation so pungent and soul-stirring, so sublimated and overwhelming, that all present seemed to forget that they were in a temporal court, and no one seemed disposed to interrupt her in her course. She sat down, with the blessings of the multitude upon her; and however they might think her enthusiastic, none doubted her sincerity. The learned judge, in charging the jury, placed the case on two points: First, conceding that to assume the Almighty's prerogatives was blasphemy, he submitted whether such an assumption was not evidence of that insane state of mind, which rendered the defendant incapable of committing crime; this was for the jury to determine. Second, should the jury consider the defendant of sufficiently sane mind to commit crime, then they would inquire into the *intent*, or *quo animo*, with which she had acted. If her design had been to revile the Deity, to contemn the mission of Jesus Christ, or bring the Christian Scriptures into contempt, then was she guilty of blasphemy. If, on the contrary, she had acted from mistaken views, or religious frenzy,—if, in other words, her *motives* were sincere, however erroneous her opinions, she could not be guilty of the crime alleged.

Jemimah's speech, though by the legal gentlemen present considered *as travelling out of the record*, was still sounding in the ears of the rustic jury, who, without troubling themselves with the judge's learned charge, proclaimed their verdict of acquittal, without leaving their box.

Potter was much annoyed at this result; but he derived comfort from the reflection that nothing could defeat

his recovery of the land, of which he held the paper-title. The links in the chain, to his apprehension, were too simple and direct to involve any doubt as to his success. 1. The immemorial Indian right to the country, by the gift of God. 2. Indian conveyance to Oliver Phelps, by solemn treaty. 3. Grant from Phelps to Jemimah Wilkinson, and her heirs and assignees forever. 4. Jemimah's deed to her disciples. 5. Sundry of the disciples' re-leases to Hiram Potter. "Thank God," says Hiram, "this is matter of law, in which the old hypocrite's prayers and tears can avail her nothing." At length the trial came on. The presiding judge was no other than the late chancellor Kent, whose brilliant intellect and forensic science have won him renown, even in Westminster Hall. In this, as in the other case, Jemimah declined the aid of counsel. She sat in all the majesty of royalty, facing two of the most eminent counsellors in the state, whom Potter had retained, and imported from the city, to make success doubly sure. The case was opened, and the documentary evidence exhibited clearly establishing the plaintiff's right. The learned judge, in commiseration of the defendants, and regarding Jemimah as necessarily unqualified as counsel for them, humanely proposed to assign legal gentlemen to assist in the defence, who would be better able to measure swords with the champions from New York, than a Rhode Island spinster. The prophetess felt her dignity touched by the suggestion, and she thus addressed the court: "Hast thou never read, that He taketh the wise in his own craftiness? That God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the wise, and foolish things to bring to nought the wisdom of the mighty?"

"Well, well," said the judge; "but here is a connected chain of title that ties up your hands, and binds you hand and foot."

"Be it so," said Jemimah; "but is it not written, 'I will break their *chains* from off their neck, and cast their *bands* asunder, that my people may go free?' Judge Kent, hast thou faith? 'All things are possible to him that believeth.'"

She thereupon drew from her large pocket a most formidable parchment, having appended to it two hundred seals, with the signatures of all her followers, exemplified by the great seal of the state, certifying that it had been duly recorded in the Secretary of State's office, long previous to Potter's re-leases. The instrument bore even date with the deeds which she had given to her people, and was explanatory of those deeds. It constituted Jemimah Wilkinson sole trustee for her followers, in the whole of their lands, and re-invested the title in her, as such trustee. It referred to the deeds, and went on to modify them thus: "that the interest in the lands, granted by said deeds should be held no longer than the subscribers remained in full fellowship in the *elect-church;* and that any grant, sale, or *re-lease* of said lands, by any member, should operate as a forfeiture of his right; that nothing should *pass to the purchaser*, by any such sale, but that the land should thereupon revert to the said Jemimah."

This instrument the prophetess read, in the hearing of the whole court and bar, in a firm voice, and with most provoking *nonchalance*. The court decided that this instrument, being executed at the same time with the deeds to the disciples, was to be taken as part and parcel of the same transaction, and to be construed in connexion with the deeds; the effect of which was, to reinvest Jemimah with the title as trustee, and to render the estates inalienable by any act of her followers.

The tables being thus turned upon poor Potter, he left the court in disgrace, with a heavy bill of costs upon his

shoulders. He was soon afterwards impeached for his conduct in this affair, and deposed from his office as judge. It is due to the magnanimity of Jemimah to say, that she refused to come forward as a witness against her quondam disciple, on his impeachment; observing, that "she pitied poor Potter, whose bad heart was a punishment quite sufficient for him; and that she would not place the weight of her finger in the scale to increase that punishment."

It was intended to note the progress of the *elect* hierarchy, to draw out their rules, their domestic economy, their distinctive and peculiar usages, etc., but these would fill a volume. A few more remarks must close this article.

However presumptuous and arrogant were the pretensions of the prophetess as a "*divine*" messenger, they never seem to have led her into any immoral or unjust conduct. In her abounding wealth she was the same plain, devout, nursing mother to her flock, as when surrounded by poverty and want. She took no advantage of her power in temporal matters, but caused her meanest disciple to fare as well as his "*divine*" mistress; yea, more, she submitted to fastings and privations which were never imposed upon her servants. Her hospitality to strangers and visitants was without a parallel. On Sundays, when many of the surrounding gentry came out to spend an hour in her chapel, as a matter of pastime, she never suffered them to depart without a bountiful dinner, served up in her dining hall in a neat and most inviting manner. The writer of this article was once present upon such an occasion.

When service was closed, which was performed by Jemimah in a sitting posture, on an elevated stand, she invited all strangers and visitants to *take bread* with her before their departure; then, retiring into a screened

alcove at the back of the stand, a small bell was heard; then the clatter of many footsteps from the kitchen to the dining-hall; and finally, the great bell, in announcement of dinner.

In coming into the room, we congratulated ourselves that we were to dine with the great "*vicegerent*," for she stood, covered with her broad-brimmed hat, at the head of the table; but we were mistaken. When all were standing before their plates, she spread out her hands, blessed the food for our use, in the name of the Lord, then, waving her hand in token of adieu, retired to her *sanctum sanctorum*.

The dinner was excellent, the cheer better becoming a nobleman's mansion than the spiritual establishment of a humble prophetess. We saw no more of Jemimah; but we left her hall with satiated appetites, full of benevolence for all mankind, and with the best of wishes for the prosperity and happiness of the prophetess of Jerusalem.

A sentiment had long prevailed among her people, that Jemimah was to live forever. Whether this was directly inculcated in her teachings, or was an inference drawn from the fact that she had once died in Rhode Island, and was now moving about in her resurrection body, cannot be positively asserted; yet the impression was universal among her flock, that she was to die no more. However, nature was not to be baulked in this way. The "keepers of the house began to tremble;" advancing age admonished the "*vicegerent*" that she must by-and-by abdicate her spiritual kingdom, and leave her lambs without a shepherd. To prepare them for this event, she announced that it was needful for her to go away, that she might send the Comforter, and prepare for them a habitation in the New Jerusalem above; whence she would return, and whither they should go up with her, to stand on the sea

of glass, with the hundred and forty and four thousand, to reign forever and ever! She charged them not to weep for her, as those who had no hope; that, though she should sleep, she should revive again; for, "I desire," said she, "there may be no funeral at my departure, no hearse, no coach, no pomp, no parade; but the blessing of them who loved me on earth, and are following me to the New Jerusalem in heaven."

These injunctions were strictly kept; she stole away from life, unattended, unannounced, but not unwept. Her disciples hid her body in the valley where she had died; but, as in the case of the Jewish law-giver, "no man knoweth of her sepulchre, unto this day."

This event happened in 1820. Fifteen years afterwards, the writer of this article, in his travels through the country, visited for the last time the habitation of the prophetess. The scene was changed; Jerusalem's glory had departed. Her sun had set behind a cloud.

He was shown her late establishment, and, among the rest, the "*sanctum sanctorum*," of which mention has been made. It was a snug parlor, entered but by one door, through the alcove in the rear of the chapel. It was lighted by a sky-light, ornamented with pictures of apostles and saints, and furnished with cushioned chairs, and a respectable theological library.

Not an article in the room had been removed from the day of her death. There were her dressing-case, compass, magnet, thimble, needles, etc., and a ponderous quarto Bible, well-thumbed and marked, lying open on the table. But death had made fearful ravages among her followers. A mere fragment remained to tell that this once had been Jerusalem; and that fragment consisted of the mere effigies of aged men and women, whose bending forms and whitened locks marked them as the lingering remnants of

a bygone age, waiting for the summons to depart and join their leader in the land of forgetfulness. The scenes around begot the painful reflection that here was the end of human aspirations, human genius, human hopes, unguided by the standard of revelation.

Who that shall contemplate Jemimah Wilkinson in her genius, in her probity, in her constancy, in her perseverance and unwavering course, so richly endowed by nature with the capacity to adorn the higher circles of life, and shed a glory on her sex, will not regret that a mind so original and powerful, a heart naturally so sincere, should become the temple of a false faith, and a prey to religious fanaticism!

MADAME URSINUS.

MADAME URSINUS;

THE POISONER.

THERE are few subjects that present to the psychologist more curious traits, and more subtle enigmas than lady poisoners. The character is so opposed to all our ideas of feminine feeling and affection, that, except under circumstances of extreme excitement, resentment of slighted attachment, blind jealousy, or revenge of injured honor, its existence would seem hardly possible. If we search for motives we find them to be generally of the most selfish and grovelling kind. They are, commonly, to put out of the way some or all of the people around who have money to leave. Other base passions come into play, but Mammon, the basest spirit that fell, is generally at the bottom of their career. It is amazing the variety and amiability of character that is worn for years to cover the foul fiend within. For long periods these female vampyres live in the heart of a family circle, wearing the most life-like marks of goodness and kindness, of personal attraction and spiritual gifts; caressed, fêted, honored as the very pride of their sex, while they are all the time calculating on the lives and the purses of those nearest, and who should be dearest to them.

Some of these modern Medeas have played the part of the fashionable, or the æsthetic; some, of the domestically

amiable; some, of the devoted attendant on the sick and the suffering. Heaven defend us from such devotion! May no such tigress smooth our pillow, — smile blandly on us in our pains which she cannot take away, though she has the satisfaction of knowing that they will take us away, — and mix, with taper fingers, the opiate of our repose! Amid the most stealthy-footed and domestically benign of this feline race, were the Widow Zwanziger, and Madam Gottfried, of Germany. They were amongst the most successful, though not the most distinguished, in this art of poisoning. They went on their way, slaying all around them, for years upon years, and yet were too good and agreeable to be suspected, though death was but another name for their shadows. Funerals followed these fatal sisters as certainly as thunder follows lightning, and undertakers were the only men who flourished in their path.

The Widow Zwanziger was an admirable cook and nurse. Her soups and coffee had a peculiar strength; her watchful care by the sick bed was in all hearts; she kissed the child she meant to kill, and pillowed the aching head with such soothing address that it never ached again. Madam Gottfried was so attractive a person that her ministration was sought by people of much higher rank than her own; she was so warm a friend that she was a friend unto death, and one attached soul after another breathed their last in her arms. Husband after husband departed and still her hand was sought, and still it practised its cunning.

All women of this class have had an extraordinary degree of vanity, — and, what is more, they have had a perfect passion for their art. The Marchioness de Brinvilliers was an enthusiast in the composition of the rarest poisons, of which her accomplice, Sainte-Croix, was so

eminent a compounder. The admiration of her beauty, the distinctions of her rank, afforded her but a feeble satisfaction in comparison with that of watching the operation of some subtly lethal essence. She certainly was not the mere marchioness, but the princess of poisoners; and yet it remained for Madame Ursinus to give additional touches of perfection to this peculiar character. She was at once a lady of fashion, a pietist, a writer of useful tracts, a poetess, and a poisoner. Through all the dangers of these various careers she lived to the good old age of seventy-six, and died — lamented! Brinvilliers, Zwanziger and Gottfried confessed that they were conquered by their crimes; but Madame Ursinus, branded in public opinion, continued to defy it, and conquered even that; and to the very last gasp persisted in playing the heroine. Nay, more, without confession, remorse, or penitence, she strove in her own way and with no trifling success, to achieve the reputation of a saint. Surely it is worth while to dig up from the rubbish-heap of the Prussian criminal court, a few fragments of the history of such a woman.

The widow of privy-councillor Ursinus lived honored and courted in the highest circles of Berlin. Her rank, and the reputation of her husband, whom she had lost but a few years, her handsome fortune, her noble figure and impressive features, together with her spirit and her accomplishments, made her a centre of attraction in the society of the time. She lived in a splendid house, and her establishment in all its appointments was perfect. We may imagine the sensation created by the news of her arrest.

Madame Ursinus was seated in the midst of a brilliant company on the evening of the fifth of March, 1803, at the card-table, when a servant, with all the signs of terror in his face, entered, and informed her that the hall and

ante-room were occupied by police, who insisted on seeing her. Madame Ursinus betrayed no surprise or emotion. She put down her cards, begged the party with whom she was engaged at play to excuse the interruption, observing that it was some mistake, and that she would be back in a moment.

She went, but did not return. After waiting some time her partners inquired after her, and learned, to their consternation, that she was arrested and carried off to prison on a charge of poisoning.

A confidential servant, Benjamin Klein, had complained in the preceding month of February of indisposition. She gave him a basin of beef-tea, and some days afterwards some medicine in raisins. This, so far from removing his complaint, increased it; and when his mistress, a few days afterwards, offered him some boiled rice, he said he could not eat it, and was much struck by observing that she carefully put it away where no one else could get it. This excited in his mind strong suspicions that there was something in the food which was detrimental to health, and associated with his condition. He resolved secretly to examine his mistress's room and cabinet, and in the latter he found a small parcel with the ominous label — Arsenic.

The next day his attentive mistress brought him some stewed prunes, which she recommended as likely to do him good; and this time he accepted them with apparent thankfulness, but took care that none of them should enter his mouth. He communicated his suspicions to the lady's maid, in whom he had confidence, and she quickly carried off the prunes to her brother, who was the apprentice of a celebrated apothecary. The apprentice communicated the prunes and the suspicion to his master, who tested them, and found them well seasoned with arsenic. The apothecary very soon conveyed the discovery to the magis-

trate, and the magistrate, after hearing the statement of the servant and the lady's maid, arrested the great lady.

People, of course, now began to look back on the life of this distinguished woman; and it was remembered, that her husband and an aunt, to whose last days she had paid assiduous attention, and whose wealth had fallen to her, had gone off suddenly. Madame Ursinus was at once set down as a second Brinvilliers, and wonderful revelations were expected. The general appetite for the marvellous became ravenous and insatiable. There appeared almost immediately — it is wonderful how quickly such things are done — a book, by M. Frederic Buchholz, entitled the "Confessions of a Female Poisoner, written by herself," which was rapidly bought up and devoured, as the veritable confession of the Ursinus.

But, alas for the hungering and thirsting public, Madame Ursinus was not a lady of the confessing sort! She was a clever, far-seeing soul, who had laid her grand plans well, and had allowed no witnesses, and feared no detection. True, if she had poisoned her husband and her aunt, witness of the poison itself might be forthcoming; but the chemical tests for poisons were not then so well known as they are now. The bodies were disinterred and examined, and no trace of poison was found. The state of the stomach and intestines were most suspicious; but the doctors disagreed as to the cause, as doctors will; and so far Madame Ursinus was safe.

But, there was no getting over the fact that the prunes intended for the cautious Benjamin Klein had arsenic in them, and the Ursinus was too shrewd to attempt to deny it. On this point she did confess, promptly, frankly, and fully. But then, she meant no harm, at least against him. She had no intention of murdering the man. What good could that do her? — he had no money to leave.

No; her motive was very different. In early life her affections had been thwarted through the obstinacy of parents; she had married a man whom she highly esteemed, but did not love; another friend, whom she did love, had died of consumption; and she was disgusted with life. The splendor and gayety which surrounded her were a hollow splendor, a wearisome gayety. She had been prosperous, but that prosperity had only accelerated her present mood. She had outlived the relish of existence, and had resolved to die. Ignorant, however, poor innocent soul! of the force of this poison, she wanted to learn how much would be sufficient for its object; and therefore she had done as young doctors are said to do in hospitals — made a few experiments on her patient, the unfortunate Benjamin Klein. She had given him the very minutest quantity, so as to be quite safe, and had cautiously increased the successive doses — not with the least intention to do him any permanent harm, but to ascertain the effectual dose for herself. She would not for her life have hurt the man. In society she had been noted for her sensibility, — for the almost morbid delicacy of her nerves and the acuteness of her sympathies. That was all. As to the charges of having administered poison to her nearest connections, she treated the calumny with the utmost indignation. The judges were puzzled; the Ursinus was resolute in the protestation of her innocence; and the public were at a disagreeable nonplus.

And what really had been the life and character of the Ursinus? Sophia Charlotte Elizabeth Weingarten was the daughter of a so-called Baron Weingarten, — who, as secretary of legation in Austria, had, under a charge of high treason, crossed to Prussia, and assumed the name of Weiss. Fräulein Weingarten, or Von Weiss, was born in 1760. While residing in her teens with an elder

married sister, wife of the Councillor of State Haacke, at Spandau, occurred that genuine love affair which her parents so summarily trampled upon. She was called home to Stendal, and, in her nineteenth year, married to privy-councillor Ursinus. The privy-councillor was a man of high standing, high character, and most exemplary life; but, unluckily, all these gifts and graces are often conferred upon or acquired by men who do not possess the other qualities that young ladies of nineteen admire. The worthy councillor was old, sickly, deaf, and passionless. In fact, he was a dull, common-place, diligent, unimaginative pack-horse and official plodder; most meritorious in his motives, and great in his department of public business; but just the last man for a lively handsome girl of nineteen. On the other hand, he had his good qualities, even as a husband. He had no jealousies, and the most unbounded indulgence.

Soon after their marriage they removed to Berlin, where, amid the gay society of the capital, Madame Ursinus soon contracted a warm friendship for a handsome young Dutch officer, of the name of Rogay. Rogay, in fact, was the man of her heart. She declared, with her usual candor, in one of her examinations before the magistrates, that she was made for domestic affection. That as there was no domestic affection between herself and her departed husband, neither he nor she pretended any. They agreed to consider themselves as a legal couple, and as friends, and no more. As to Captain Rogay, she made no secret of it that she clung to him with the most ardent feeling of love.

This attachment, the privy-councillor — the most reasonable of men — so far from resenting, encouraged and approved. He wished his wife to make herself happy, and enjoy life in her own way; and there is a long letter

preserved in the criminal records, which he himself wrote at her dictation, to the beloved Rogay, on an occasion when he had absented himself for some time, urging him to renew his visits, and that in the most love-like terms, the tenderest of which the old man underlined with his own hand.

But Rogay came not; he removed to another place, and there, soon after, died. Here was now another subject of suspicion. Rogay had cause, said people, to keep away; while she fawned on him, she had killed him. But here, again, the testimony of two of the most celebrated physicians of the day was unanimous that the cause of Rogay's death was consumption and nothing more. The physician attested that he had attended Rogay while he was living and suffering under the roof of Privy-Councillor Ursinus; that Madame Ursinus displayed the most unequivocal affection for him; that she attended on him, gave him everything with her own hand, and that no wife could have been more assiduously tender of him than she was. She called herself Lotté in her communications with him; not only because her name was Charlotte, but because she was an enthusiast of the Werter school, and loved to be of the same name as Werter's idol. But yet Rogay withdrew himself and died alone, and at a distance.

Three years after the decease of Rogay, died Ursinus himself. Old he was, it is true, but he was in perfect health. The kind wife made him a little festival on his birthday, and in the night he sickened and died. He had taken something that disagreed with him — but what so common at a feast? Madame Ursinus sat up with him alone; she called not a single creature; she hoped he would be better; but the man was aged and weak, and he went his way.

The year after, followed as suddenly her maiden aunt,

the wealthy Miss Witte. One evening her doctor left her quite well, and in the night she sickened and died. Madame Ursinus was quite alone with her, called no single domestic, but let the good lady die in her arms. Both the bodies of the husband and the aunt, now Klein's affair took place, were disinterred and examined. There was no poison traceable, but the corpses were found dried together as if baked, or as if they were mummies of a thousand years old. The skin of the abdomen was so tough that it resisted the surgeon's knife, and the soft parts of the body had assumed the appearance of hard tallow. The hands, fingers, and feet of the old man were drawn together as if by spasms, his skin resembled parchment, and the stomachs of both bore every trace of injury and inflammation which had reduced them to an inseparable mass. Yet, the eminent doctors declared that poison was not the cause of death in either case, but apoplexy or — in short, that there was not the remotest symptom of poison.

So instead of the pleasure-loving multitude obtaining a spectacle and a *fête*, the whirling sword of the executioner and the falling head were exchanged for perpetual imprisonment, and the handsome, wealthy widow of forty was sent to spend the remainder of her days in the fortress of Glatz.

Here she assumed a new character. Her part of the interesting woman of fashion was played out; she had become interesting beyond her wish, and fate had now assigned her another part, — to defend her life and reputation. There was a call to develop her powers of fortitude and of intellect, and she embraced it; not only before the tribunal of justice, but in her whole conduct through the thirty long years of her imprisonment.

No sooner had she entered on her quarters in the prison of Glatz, than she commenced writing an elaborate defence

of herself. In her room, which was the best the fortress afforded to its captives, and which she was allowed to furnish according to her pleasure, she placed a little table under the narrow window in the massy wall, and arranged upon it everything that was necessary for literary labor. She was surrounded by books; not only for the refreshment of her mind, but for laborious research and instruction. In this defence at which she labored, for she was by no means satisfied with that of her paid advocates, she now discovered the uncommon abilities with which she was endowed. If any one had ever entertained a doubt of her powers of reasoning and calculation, of the clearness of her foresight, and the acuteness of her penetration, that doubt was here at once dispelled in the most convincing manner. She proved herself so profoundly versed in the law, that she now struck her legal advisers with astonishment, as she had done the judges on her trial. Her defence, which was addressed to her relatives, presented her in the new character of a masterly writer and legal scholar. This defence is still extant, and no defence of a murderer, not even that of Eugene Aram, is a more striking specimen of talent and of well-assumed virtue and virtuous indignation.

"Scarcely," she says, "can I call to mind, without the overthrow of my understanding and the utter prostration of my whole being, the accusation of being the murderer of my husband and my aunt. My innermost soul becomes worked with terror at the recollection of the moment when I was seized with all the horrors of death by the opened graves of my beloved relatives; when surrounded by all the pangs of a deadly cruelty, and pursued by the furies of thousand-tongued imprecations, I heard myself cursed as the destroyer of those who sank so safely to slumber in my arms. Had Providence then heard the

sole wish of my heart, the sole voice of my superhuman anguish, that moment would have annihilated my life and my sufferings, and yet have flung the light of the sun on all the evidences of my innocence, which now, however, is made plain by other means.

"In vain have I been for ten long months pursued, martyred, broken to pieces, crushed in soul and body by the reproach of that shamefully horrible crime, and exposed to all the contempt and malice of the public. In vain have the graves of my loved ones been opened, the repose of the dead violated, and proceedings taken in the first capital of Europe, in this age of knowledge and humanity, under the eyes of the most amiable and kind-hearted of kings, that have no example, and with posterity will have no credence. In vain have I, unhappy one, been represented by inhuman writers as a monster and a terrible warning; in vain have I been painted, in the blackest and the most venomous of colors, as a lesson to my own, and a dark eternal memory to after times; in vain have I been a thousand times murdered and tortured; the highest authorities, the clearest evidence, pronounce me guiltless."

In the prison she was allowed a female companion, and was often visited by distinguished strangers, whom so far from shrinking from, she was ever eager to see, never failing to describe her misfortunes in vivid colors, to assert her innocence, and intreat their exertions for her liberation. Many of these, however, thought that the lot of the poisoner who rustled in silk and satin over the floors of the fortress — compared with that of other convicts, who for some rude deed done in a moment of passion labored in heavy chains, welded to carts, or with iron horns projecting above their brows, sweltered in deep pits — had

nothing in it of a severity which warranted an appeal to royal mercy.

But in her seventieth year, the royal mercy reached her. She was liberated from prison, but restricted for the remainder of her life to the city and fortress of Glatz. Here she once more played the part, not of a poisoner, but of an innocent woman and an aristocratic lady. She again opened a handsome house, and gave entertainments; and they were frequented! Nay, such was her vanity, that she used every diligence to draw illustrious strangers into her circle. An anecdote is related on undoubted authority, which is characteristic. At one of her suppers, a lady sitting near her actually started, as she saw some white powder on a salad which was handed to her. Madame Ursinus observed it, and said, smiling, "Don't be alarmed, my dear, it is not arsenic."

Another anecdote is not less amusing. Immediately after quitting her prison, she invited a large company to coffee. An invitation to coffee by the poisoner, as she was called in Glatz by old and young, was a matter of curiosity, the grand attraction of the day. All went; but one individual, who had been overlooked in the invitation, out of resentment planned a savage joke. He bribed the confectioner to mix in the biscuit some nauseating drug. In the midst of the entertainment, the whole company were seized simultaneously with inward pains and sickness, gave themselves up for lost, started up in horror, and rushed headlong from the house. Glatz was thunderstruck with the news, which went through it like an electric flash, that Madame Ursinus had poisoned all her guests.

Regardless of these little accidents, she lived a life of piety and benevolence; so said the jailor of the fortress, and her female companion. She sought to renew her

intercourse with her sister, Madame von Hocke, saying: "We are again the little Yetté and little Lotté; our happy childhood stands before me." But the sister kept aloof, and the wounded, but patient and forgiving Ursinus exclaimed: "Ah! that life and its experiences can thus operate on some people, by no means making them happier. God reward us all for the good that we have been found worthy to do, and pardon us our many errors!"

She died in her seventy-seventh year; and her companion declared that she could not enough admire the resignation with which she endured her sufferings through the aid of religion. She left her considerable property partly to her nephews and nieces, and partly to benevolent institutions. A year before her death she ordered her own coffin, and left instructions that she should lie in state with white gloves on her hands, a ring on her finger containing the hair of her late husband, and his portrait on her bosom. Five carriages, filled with friends and acquaintances, followed her to the grave, which was found adorned with green moss, auriculas, tulips, and immortelles; an actual bower of blooms. When the clergyman had ended his discourse, six boys and six poor girls, whom she had cared for in her lifetime, stepped forward and sang a hymn in her honor. The grave-digger had little to do; female friends, and many poor people to whom she had been a benefactress, filled the grave with their own hands, and arched the mound over it. It was a bitter cold morning, yet the churchyard could scarcely contain the crowd. And thus the POISONER passed away like a SAINT.

MADAME GOTTFRIED.

MADAME GOTTFRIED;

THE POISONER.

In the year 1825, a gentleman, named Rumpff, established himself in a house in Bremen, which belonged to and was also inhabited by a widow lady named Gottfried. She was by universal consent a charming woman; her manners were fascinating, and her person, which in her youth was said to have been extremely beautiful, was still very attractive and agreeable.

She was, however, unfortunate. Two husbands, her father, her mother, her brother, and several children, had all died within a very short period of time. She had actually had the pain of herself ordering thirteen coffins of the undertaker who lived opposite to her, — and these for her nearest and dearest friends. She had, it is true, had the consolation of nursing them all during their last sicknesses, a duty which she had discharged with the most exemplary assiduity and tenderness. Every body pitied her; religion was her refuge, and a pious resignation to the inscrutable degrees of Providence alone supported her under these multiplied calamities. Her case, in short, excited so much commiseration, that she was publicly prayed for in church by a minister of high reputation and signal piety.

She was not only received in good society, but, although

originally born and wedded in the burgher class, her company was courted by persons of high rank and consideration. She had had many suitors; had been twice married, and was now forty years of age; still she was by no means without claimants for her hand. Her personal agrémens, elegantly furnished house, and easy fortune, rendered her a desirable match; and the parents of the enamoured youths wished nothing better than to have Madame Gottfried for a daughter-in-law. But she declined their proposals. On his death-bed she had promised her dear Gottfried, of blessed memory, never to give that hand to another; and she intended to keep her word.

Still, with all these extraordinary advantages and recommendations, her ill-fortune was undeniable; every body connected with her died. Some people looked upon her as a sort of Job, a monument of suffering and patience; one whom the Lord had selected to chastise for the good of her soul, and to furnish a lesson of resignation and submission to mankind. She herself took this view of the case; while others secretly hinted that they had heard there was something poisonous in her breath, which was fatal to those who inhaled it.

It was not without many expostulations from his friends, that Mr. Rumpff established himself in the house of this amiable but ill-starred lady. He, however, was no believer in stars, good or ill; and had no idea of resigning a residence that suited him, on such absurd grounds; and for some little time he certainly felt that he had every reason to congratulate himself on his decision. The most gratifying relations established themselves betwixt his family and the friendly widow, who seemed to have nothing in the world to do but to make herself agreeable to them. Her kindness to the young people was quite remarkable; but, unfortunately, at the end of eight weeks, this general joy

was interrupted by the death of Madame Rumpff, who was seized with a vomiting shortly after her confinement, which carried her off in a few hours.

Nothing could exceed the attentions of Madame Gottfried; she never quitted the bedside of the dying woman, whose best consolation in her last moments was, that she left behind her so kind a friend to protect her orphans and comfort her bereaved husband. The hopes and wishes of the departed mother were, in this respect, fulfilled to the letter. Madame Gottfried managed the house, overlooked the servants, cherished the children, and, by her pious exhortations, allayed the anguish of the father. In the family she always went by the appellation of Aunt Gottfried.

But ill-fortune still clung to her. The maid, and the nurse who had been engaged to take care of the child, became extremely ill; and the latter finally quitted the house, declaring that she saw clearly that she never should be well whilst she remained in it.

Presently, Mr. Rumpff's journeymen and apprentices began to vomit; and some months after his wife's death he was himself seized with a similar indisposition. A healthy and strong-minded man, he exerted himself to struggle against the malady; and even fancied that the boys who worked in his manufactory, but ate their meals in the house, were merely diverting themselves by aping him, when he heard them straining and vomiting too.

But resistance was vain; he could keep nothing on his stomach; everything he ate caused him the most excruciating agonies, and his formerly blooming health declined from day to day. Neither the remedies he had recourse to himself, nor those of the physician, were of the least avail. He grew worse and worse; he lost the use of his fingers and toes; his body was as weak as an infant's;

and his mind seemed to be threatened with a similar degree of imbecility. He racked his imagination to discover the cause of these extraordinary inflictions, and, like a man seeking for some hidden treasure, he ransacked every corner of his house, from top to bottom. He never thought of poison; but he fancied there must be some decaying substance about the house, that exhaled a vapor fatal to the health of all who inhabited it. He had the boards lifted, and the walls examined; but in vain; nothing could be discovered.

At length the strong mind so far gave way as to admit a doubt, whether there might not indeed be some unknown and invisible influences — some spirits of ill, that pursued mankind to their destruction — wasting their bodies and withering their minds. But here again aunt Gottfried came to his aid; she watched over him like a mother; bade him trust in God; and when he described to her his sleepless nights of anguish, she earnestly wished him such sweet rest as blessed her own pillow.

This state of things had continued for upwards of a year, and nobody believed Mr. Rumpff would be long an inhabitant of this world, when, having ordered a pig to be killed for the use of his family, the butcher sent him a small choice bit of the animal to taste, by way of specimen. As the pork was not only very good, but sat more easily on his stomach than anything he had lately taken, he deposited the remains of it in a closet, for his next day's luncheon. He was rather surprised, however, on going to take it from the cupboard, to find it was not as he had left it. He had placed the rind underneath, but it had since been turned; and, on looking more closely, he was startled by perceiving some grains of a white powder sprinkled over it; the more so, that he immediately remem-

bered to have remarked the same appearance on a salad, and on some broth which had been lately served to him.

On the former occasions, he had applied to his good housekeeper, aunt Gottfried, to know what it was; and she had declared it to be grease. But now, for the first time, a dreadful suspicion possessed him; could it be poison? He said nothing, but secretly sent for his physician; a chemical investigation soon revealed the mystery; the white powder was arsenic.

The discovery was made on the fifth of March; on the sixth, after a cursory examination, Madame Gottfried was arrested. She was found in bed, and said she was ill; but they carried her away to prison, nevertheless.

The tidings of this most unexpected catastrophe soon spread over the city, and the dismay of its inhabitants was past all expression. A lady so beloved, so respected! So amiable, so friendly, so pious! Then came dark suspicions relative to the past, — the strange mortality, the singular similarity of the symptoms that had attended the last illness of all who had died in that house. People scarcely dared whisper their thoughts, but the reality far exceeded their imaginations; and the proceedings against Madame Gottfried disclosed a tissue of horrors, which, all circumstances considered, seems to surpass those of any case on record. Her crimes, combined with her successful hypocrisy, and powers of fascination, were so terrific, that in the orderly and pious city of Bremen, to this day, strange rumors and superstitions survive amongst the people, connected with the history of "Aunt Gottfried." They believe that she tickled her children to death, in order to make a poisonous broth of their flesh; that there was a vault under the house unknown to all but herself, where she prepared her poisons, and performed all sorts of devilish deeds; that she had the evil eye, and had slain

innumerable children by merely looking at them; and they were, moreover, thoroughly convinced that she was born a murderess from her mother's womb, and inherited from her parent two books, which contained instructions for all sorts of demoniacal practices.

It is not to be wondered at that the ignorant should have sought in the supernatural, an explanation of a phenomenon which confounded the experience of the most enlightened.

On being conducted to the city prison, Madame Gottfried denied all knowledge of the crime she was accused of; but a secret here came to light that astonished the beholders little less than the previous disclosures. Before being conducted to the cell in which she was to be confined, she was, according to established regulations, placed in the hands of the female attendants to be examined; and then, to their amazement, it was discovered that the lovely and admired Madame Gottfried was nothing but a hideous skeleton. Her fine complexion was artificial; — her graceful embonpoint was made up of thirteen pairs of corsets which she wore one over the other; in short, every thing was false about her; and when stripped of her factitious attractions, she stood before the amazed spectators an object no less frightful from her physical deformities than from her moral obliquity.

The effects of this exposure upon her own mind were curious; her powers of deception failed her — the astonishment and indignation she had assumed vanished; she attempted no further denials, but avowed her guilt at once; not however, in all its fearful details; it took two years to do that. She gave the narrative of her crimes piecemeal, as they recurred to her memory; for she had committed so many, that one had effaced the other from her mind. Even at the last, she admitted that she was by

no means certain of having mentioned every body to whom she had administered poison.

She was the daughter of a lady's tailor or man-milliner called Timm, — a man of the most industrious and orderly habits, an assiduous reader of the Scriptures and regular attendant at Church. She and a brother, who entered the world at the same moment as herself, were born on the sixth of March, 1785. The young man was wild, and joined the army of Napoleon; but Gesche was a model of perfection. Her person was delicate, almost etherial; her countenance open and attractive, with a smile of benignity ever on her lips; her movements were graceful, her manners bewitching, her demeanor modest, and her conduct unexceptionable. She was held up as a pattern to the young; and Father Timm, as he was called, was considered blest in the possession of such a daughter.

One thing, however, seems pretty clear, namely, — that although the parents led unexceptionable lives, and were what is commonly called *highly respectable people*, — and though the daughter received what is ordinarily considered a virtuous education, the whole was the result of merely worldly motives. There was no foundation of principle, — no sense of the beauty of virtue, nor delight in its practice for its own sake. The only object recognized was to gain the approbation and good will of mankind; and when Gesche Timm found she could attain that end as well by the simulation as by the reality of virtue, she chose the former as the easier of the two.

Her first initiation into crime seems to have been by the way of petty thefts, which she practised on her parents, and of which she allowed her brother, whose frequent misdemeanors laid him more open to suspicion, to bear the blame. Five years of impunity at length emboldened her to purloin a considerable sum belonging to a lady who

lodged in the house. Father Timm, as usual, fell upon his son; but the mother, who appears by this time to have got an inkling of the truth, bade him hold his hand, and she would presently tell him who was the thief. Accordingly she went out; and returning in about half an hour, said she had been to a wise woman, who had shown her the face of the real delinquent in a mirror. Whilst she spoke, she fixed her eyes significantly on the "angel of a daughter," who, finding she was discovered, had the prudence to discontinue her practices. The affair, however, was hushed up; and Gesche's character remained as fair in the eyes of the world as before.

At twelve years of age, her school education being completed, she was retained at home to do the house work and help her father. She also kept his books, and made herself so useful by her diligence and her readiness as an accountant, that he was more than ever delighted with her, and was induced to commit his affairs more and more to her management; an advantage of which she did not fail to avail herself after her own peculiar fashion; meantime, she was cheerful, obedient, pious, and charitable. She was her parents' almoner, and was taught to believe that the prayers and blessings of the poor were the sure passport to heaven, — a persuasion that influenced her whole subsequent life; for whilst she administered poison with one hand, she administered charity with the other, secure in the belief that the good she did would efface the evil. She had tears, too, ready upon all occasions; she wept when her father prayed and sang his morning hymn; and she wept when her victims, writhing in anguish, called on God to pity them and release them from their pains.

Yet was she a woman of no violent passions. She was neither avaricious, luxurious, nor even sensual; although

later in life her lapses from chastity might have given color to the suspicion. She was cold, calm, and self-possessed. Her ruling passion was vanity, and an inordinate desire to be admired and respected in the small and humble sphere that surrounded her.

Her amusements were dancing, in which her parents allowed her to take lessons, and acting plays wherein she greatly distinguished herself. As she was the prettiest, and also the cleverest among the young people, the best parts were assigned to her, as well as the most ornamental attire the theatrical wardrobe could produce; so that each representation became to her a triumph, and was anticipated with the most eager delight. However, the truth was, that Gesche's whole life was acting; and there have been very few such consummate comedians seen, either on the boards, or the larger stage of the world. For forty-three years she maintained her part to such perfection, that no suspicion had ever entered into men's minds that she had any other character than the one she appeared in.

In order to augment her attractions and powers of pleasing, she was desirous of learning music; but Father Timm not only thought this expense beyond his means, but considered so refined an accomplishment ill adapted to a girl who had to do the work of a house-servant, and daily appear before the door with a broom in her hand. He, however, proposed that she should learn French, and she made an apparent progress that delighted her master; but like every thing else about her, it was only apparent. She had considerable aptness, but no application. Study wearied her, so she employed an acquaintance to prepare her lessons for her, desiring him to be careful to leave an error or two, to avoid suspicion. The little she picked up

of the language, however, helped her to play her part in life, when she had risen into another grade of society.

Gesche, or Gesina, as she now called herself, had rejected several offers of marriage, when being one evening at the theatre with her friend Marie Heckendorf, she was persecuted by the too obtrusive attentions of a stranger, who appeared by his air to be a person of some distinction. A young neighbor of the Timm's family, whose name was Miltenburg, stept forward to protect her, and see her home; and from that occasion an intimacy sprung up between them which terminated in marriage.

Though the son of a man in exceedingly good circumstances, and in point of condition a very advantageous match for Gesina, young Miltenburg's reputation was not quite *intacte*. He had been drawn in at an early age to marry a woman of very indifferent character, who had introduced him into a good deal of dissipation and loose company. The wife was dead, but the vices she had encouraged had not died with her. The young man's health, as well as his morals and his father's fortune, were injured by the life he led; and in spite of her humble station old Miltenburg was delighted to accept so virtuous and exemplary a daughter-in-law as Gesina. He testified his approval by a handsome settlement; and whilst the young lady and her parents exulted in this unexpected stroke of fortune, the world in general lamented that so lovely and incomparable a creature should be thrown away on an exhausted debauchee.

The marriage ceremony was performed in Mr. Miltenburg's picture-gallery. Over Gesina's head hung a fine Madonna and Child by one of the old masters; on one side of it, Jesus distributing the bread and wine; on the other, a head of St. Peter; — it was exactly on that spot that she afterwards poisoned her mother.

The young bride had no regard for her husband; but the circumstances of the marriage gratified her vanity and self-love to the utmost. She brought peace into a house where there had been nothing but strife and contention. Her virtues shone the brighter from the dark ground of her predecessor's vices. She was exalted into a goddess; father and son worshipped her, and power and dominion were given to her over the whole household. Her husband made her superb presents, and sought by all manner of pleasures and indulgences to make her amends for those imperfections which he was conscious his dissolute life had entailed upon him, and which incapacitated him from winning the affections of a young bride.

In the present case, however, it is extremely problematical whether there were any affections to win; but her vanity soon found a suitor, if not her heart. A young wine-merchant, of the name of Gottfried, whom she met at a ball, took her fancy, and an intimacy sprung up between them, which seems to have met with no opposition on the part of the husband. A second lover, named Karnov, was equally well received. Previous, however, to these lapses from duty, she had several confinements, the results of which appear to have been an extraordinary degree of leanness; a defect which she remedied by putting on an additional pair of corsets, as occasion required. The seventeen pairs which were found in her wardrobe at her death, were sold in Bremen for so small a sum as two groschen; people being unwilling to have any thing to do with them. It was supposed they were endowed with some magical properties. They had certainly done a great deal of harm to their possessor; for she had materially injured her health, and aggravated the defect she was so anxious to conceal, by compressing her waist with them.

Gottfried appears to have been a good-looking, agreeable, light-hearted, and rather accomplished man. He had a well-selected library, played the guitar, and published two volumes of songs. Her inclination for him seems to have approached more nearly to a passion than any she ever entertained; whilst his assiduities appear to have been chiefly prompted by his flattered vanity, and a desire to enjoy the comforts and pleasures of Miltenburg's house.

These comforts and pleasures, however, were in some jeopardy, from young Miltenburg's improvidence and inattention to his business; and his wife began to question with herself seriously, what was the value of his life; and what was the use of his living at all, with a constitution so ruined as to be incapable of any enjoyment. About this period, namely, in 1813, old Miltenburg, the father, died, as it was afterwards established, from natural causes; but this was her first introduction to the grim tyrant, and she seems to have been determined to make herself thoroughly familiar with his features at once. She astonished everybody by her constant visits to the chamber of death, and the manner in which she contemplated the features, and pressed the hands of the deceased.

From this time the idea of getting rid of her husband gradually ripened into an uncontrollable desire; but she was at a loss how to set about it. In the meanwhile, in order to augment the interest felt for herself, and reconcile the world to his loss, she maligned him on all hands; whilst she supplied herself with money by robbing both him and other persons who lived under the roof with her, and exercised her extraordinary powers of dissimulation, by averting all suspicion from herself. She was still, in the eyes of the world, the most charming and exemplary of women.

Her resolution to despatch her husband, who, whatever his faults were, was only too kind and indulgent to her, was confirmed by a fortune-teller, whom, about this time, she consulted. The woman told her that every body belonging to her would die off; and that she would then spend the remainder of her life in prosperity and happiness. She afterwards said that her choice of the means was decided by seeing a play of Kotzebue's, in which some very amiable and interesting hero attains his objects by poisoning every body who stands in the way of them. She, however, from a remarkable degree of delicacy towards her own conscience, always avoided the use of the offensive words *murder* or *poison;* — she had recourse to the dainty paraphrase of "giving a person something."

She now recollected that her mother used to combat the rats and mice, with which her house was infested, by arsenic; and, under pretence that she wanted it for the same purpose, she asked for some. The mother gave it her, bidding her to be very cautious to keep it from the children. After an interval, during which her heart seems to have failed her, she administered the first dose to her husband at breakfast. When he had finished his repast the poor man went out, whilst she "ascended the stairs and looked out of the window after him, wondering whether he would be brought home dead."

He was not brought home, but returned of his own accord, and took to his bed, where she continued to "give him something," as occasion required. The sufferings of the unfortunate victim were frightful, and for the last four days she kept out of his room; not, as she admitted, from any conscientious pangs, but from an apprehension that he would suspect her; but she stood at the door listening to his cries and groans. Unhappily for the many she afterwards conducted through the same path of anguish, to

the grave, she was not suspected. On the contrary, he died, committing his wife and children to the care of Gottfried.

She was very apprehensive that the appearance of the body might have suggested some unpleasant ideas to the mother, who had so lately supplied her with arsenic; and when they were nailing down the coffin she thought "Miltenburg would surely awake with the knocking!"

But no such unfortunate events interfered with her plans. Her father undertook to settle her affairs, and when all was arranged she found herself a rich widow. She had suitors too, and offers of marriage, but her preference for Gottfried, who, before her husband's death, had become an inmate of the house, and still remained so, continued undiminished. He, however, made no proposals; and her parents having openly declared that she should never marry him with their consent, she began to entertain serious thoughts of removing that obstacle, "by giving them something too."

Remorse of conscience she had never felt; the only feeling that occasionally clouded her satisfaction in the success of her schemes was the fear of discovery. As time advanced and impunity gave her confidence, the apprehension in a great degree subsided. The extraordinary strength of her nerves is evinced by the following circumstance. She related, whilst in confinement, that shortly after the death of Miltenburg, as she was standing, in the dusk of the evening, in her drawing-room, she suddenly saw a bright light hovering at no great distance above the floor. It advanced towards her bed-room door and then disappeared. This recurred on three successive evenings. On another occasion she saw a shadowy appearance hovering near her. "Ach! denke ich, das ist

Miltenburg seine Erscheinung!" "Alas! thought I, that is the ghost of Miltenburg."

Yet did not this impression stay her murderous hand. During the rest of her life, and especially when in prison, she declared she was visited by the apparitions of those she had poisoned; indeed it was, at last, the terror these spectres inspired her with, that won her to confession.

It is a very remarkable fact, that for several years Madame Gottfried had a servant girl, called Beta Cornelius, who was herself one of the most honest, industrious, innocent and pure-minded creatures that ever existed, living in intimate and close communion with her, who yet continued to believe her an angel of goodness. So exalted, indeed, was the girl's opinion of her mistress, that she became occasionally the unconscious instrument of her crimes; and so great was her respect, that she was silent about whatever she saw; and whatever she was desired to do, she did without question or suspicion.

In the meantime, Gottfried's proposals were not forthcoming; and believing him to be withheld by the objections her parents made to the match, on the one hand, and by the consideration of her having a family of children, on the other, she thought it was time to remove these obstacles out of his way. She said that her resolution, with respect to her parents, had been fortified by the pious and frequently expressed wishes of the old people, that neither might long survive the other. She also consulted several other fortune-tellers, who all predicted the mortality that was to ensue amongst her connexions. She made no secret of this prophecy; but, on the contrary, frequently lamented that she knew she was doomed to lose her children and all her relations. She always concluded these communications by pious ejaculations, expressing a most perfect resignation to the will of Providence.

"God's will be done! The ways of the Lord are inscrutable, and we must bow to his decrees," etc.

About this time, Frau Timm, the mother, was seized with an indisposition, which continued for a fortnight, and inspired the daughter with lively hopes that the good woman was going to save her the trouble of helping her out of the world. She did not die, however; and as this illness occurred just as the old couple were changing their residence, the invalid took shelter in her daughter's house, to get out of the way of the bustle. Here she was lodged in a finely furnished apartment, which she remarked was much too grand for a humble body like her; but Madame Miltenburg, smiling, bade her fancy herself in childbed, a jest which so took the old lady's fancy, that "she shook her sides with laughter."

Three days after this, Frau Timm, having requested her daughter to step home, for the purpose of fetching some little article she wanted, Madame Miltenburg discovered, amongst her mother's household goods, a small packet of rats' bane, "which, it appeared to her, Providence had laid in her way." She carried it away with her; and on the ensuing night she could not sleep for the thoughts this acquisition suggested.

However, the mother had a relapse, and again the daughter hoped she would leave the world without her aid; but again she was disappointed; and, becoming impatient, she mixed some arsenic in a glass of lemonade, the favorite beverage of the invalid. Just as she was about to administer it, her own little boy, Heinrich, came into the room with a book he had been reading, and asked his grandmother if it were true, "that the hand of the undutiful child would grow out of the grave." Gesina said that the boy's innocent question had cut her to the soul; but it did not stay her hand. As she presented the

fatal draught to the old woman, three swallows flew into the room, and settled on the bed; the mother, smiling, said, "see the three pretty birds;" but the knees of the murderess shook, and her heart beat, for she thought they were the harbingers of death! She declared that such a thing had never happened before or since; that no swallows built about the house, or frequented the neighborhood.

The poison did its work; the dying woman took the sacrament, and bade a tender adieu to her husband and daughter, committing her absent son to the care of the latter. She bade the old man rejoin her quickly in heaven; and he, pressing her hand affectionately, answered, "that in two months he would follow her."

Gesina related, that, whilst she was mixing the poison for her mother, she was seized with such a violent fit of laughter, that she was almost frightened at herself; but she comforted herself with the idea, that "her mother would soon so laugh in heaven." By the body, she felt neither pity nor remorse; she was, on the contrary, cheerful, and fortified in the resolution to remove all obstacles out of the way of her desires. Accordingly, on the day of the interment, which was the tenth of May, she gave her youngest girl, Johanna, some arsenic on a bit of the funeral cake. The child fell ill immediately. Mr. Gottfried quieted it with some wine and water, and put it to bed. An hour afterwards, when the mother looked into the cradle, the child was dead. A few days had only elapsed when she despatched her eldest daughter, Adeline, in the same manner. The little girl died in her arms; she was a beautiful child; and when she was gone, the mother had a picture, which happened to resemble her, handsomely framed, and hung in her own room, calling it "her beloved Adeline."

The poor old grandfather was greatly affected by the death of the children, and daily visited the grave where they and his wife were laid; but his daughter comforted him with her filial attentions. One day, about a fortnight after the death of Johanna, she gave him, when he called on her, a nice basin of soup. He relished it exceedingly; and told her that her tender care would prolong his life. When he had taken the soup she accompanied him to his own house, and then left him. That night she did not undress or go to bed, for she knew she should be sent for.

In the morning, about four o'clock, the expected message came. Father Timm was very ill and wished to see his beloved daughter. She went, and remained with him till he died. Several witnesses who recalled the circumstances of the old man's death, declared that whilst she attended him, she was not only calm, but cheerful. She remembered that wine and water had relieved the sufferings of Johanna, and went to fetch some for her father. When she returned, he was sitting on the ground, talking of his blessed wife, whom he said he saw sitting on the bed waiting for him. He died on the twenty-eighth of June.

These deaths caused neither suspicion nor surprise. Her little son Henry alone asked her why God took all her children from her. She said, this question was a dagger in her heart, for Henry was her favorite child. This did not, however, prevent her poisoning him, also, in the ensuing month of September. He seems to have been a remarkably interesting boy, and his sufferings were so intense, that monster as she was, she relented for a moment as she stood by his bedside. She sent for milk, which she believed to be an antidote; but the child died in inexpressible agonies. He also said he saw those waiting for him that had gone before. "Oh mother!" cried

he, "see Adeline there! She is standing by the stove. How she smiles on me. There is my father too! I shall soon be with them in heaven!" Was there ever fiction so tragic as this!

The rapidity with which all these members of her family had descended to the grave, at length began to excite some notice, and her friends recommended a post mortem examination of the last sufferer. The doctor declared the child had died from intro-susception of the bowels; nobody thought of disputing his judgment; and no more was thought of the matter, except that the amiable Madame Miltenburg was the most unfortunate of women.

These events were followed by a very severe illness which attacked herself, and brought her also to the brink of the grave; without, however, producing any moral effect in her character. The only influence it had on her conduct was, that from this time she endeavored to set up a balance of good works, that should outweigh her crimes. She not only relieved the poor that applied to her for aid, but she sought them out in all directions. Amongst other beneficent acts, she presented a sister of her father's with a bit of land that had fallen to her with the rest of the old man's property.

Her next victim was her brother, who returned very inopportunely from the wars, an invalid and a cripple. There were several powerful motives for putting him out of the way. She was ashamed of him in every point of view. He was not a creditable relation for so elegant a person as Madame Miltenburg; he would be an impediment to her marriage with Gottfried; and he would doubtless claim a share of the inheritance.

He arrived on Friday; and on the Sunday following, she poisoned him. He died, raving about his horse and his mistress; and crying "Vive L'Empereur!"

This was on the first of June, 1816, a year after the decease of her former victims.

All obstacles were now removed, and yet Gottfried made no proposals, although she nursed him through a severe sickness, and her attentions to him were unremitting. At length, however, she became in the family way, and her honor was at stake. Once and again he promised to marry her, and still drew back; whether influenced by aversion, or an indistinct presentiment of evil, does not appear. For her part, passion was satisfied, and love extinct; but she wanted his name, rank, and inheritance. She got her friends to interfere, and the backward lover, at length, gave his word. When they had been asked twice in church, however, she reflected that as he married her on compulsion, they never would be happy together; and that it would be advisable "to give him something, too." Nay, that it would be better to do it at once. When he found himself at the point of death, he would assuredly marry her, and she thus secured the name and the fortune, without the burthen attached to them.

She poisoned him with some almond milk and arsenic, on the day the marriage was proclaimed, and the final ceremony was performed whilst he was writhing in agony. Before he died, he exacted from her a promise that she would never take a third husband; and she declined all subsequent proposals on the plea of this promise to her "blessed Gottfried."

Nobody suspected her; who could have supposed that she had poisoned this long-desired husband on her wedding day?

She was now Madame Gottfried, Countess of Orlamünde, and from the year 1819 to 1823 she made no use of her dreadful secret; but, although she had removed

husbands, children, and parents out of her path, was she happy? No; she was alone and wretched. This she admitted in her confessions; and also that after the death of her little Heinrich she had often felt remorse. "She could not bear to see other people happy with their children; the sight of the joyous young creatures passing her house as they came from school pierced her to the heart; she would shut herself up in her room and weep; and when the clear moon shone over her head she would survey the estate of which she was now the sole possessor, and ask herself how she had earned it!"

But these glimpses of humanity were of short duration. It appeared that "the blessed Gottfried," as she always called him, had debts; there were claims on his estate, and as she spent a good deal of money, and dispensed considerable sums in charity, she soon found herself in want of funds. At this period she seems to have formed a *liaison* with a certain Mr. X., a gentleman of family and fortune; but being an influential person, the particulars of his intimacy with her never transpired. Certain it is, however, that he lent her large sums of money, but, fortunately for himself, he made no advances without taking her bond for the debt. This precaution saved his life; she could have poisoned him, but she could not annihilate the papers. He was the only person connected with her who never tasted of her deadly drugs.

Her acquaintance with this gentleman seems to have introduced her to a great many pleasures. He gave her *fêtes* and parties, presented her with opera tickets, and showered on her all manner of gifts and gallantries. To use her own expressions, "she began to live again; she forgot the past, and thought herself the happiest person in the world!" She had a great many suitors for her hand, and she was surrounded by friends who revered her as a

suffering angel. She affected to be very religious; the poor blessed her, and the rich respected her. This was in 1819; and she looked upon these as some of the happiest days of her life.

The next person she helped out of the world was a gentleman of the name of Zimmerman. He wished to marry her, but marriage, as she admitted in her confessions, was by this time out of the question. Her whole life was a lie; there was no truth about her, inside or out. Her body was made up of paint and paddings, and her conduct was a tissue of deceit and hypocrisy. She could risk no close communion, nor intimate inspection; but, although she could not marry him, she could borrow money of him on the strength of his love. This she did, and as he had not the prudence of Mr. X., she poisoned him to get rid of the debt.

She also gave a few doses to her old friend, Maria Heckendorf, who offended her by some untimely advice — not enough to kill the poor woman, but sufficient to deprive her of the use of her hands and feet, which, as she lived by her labor, was almost as bad.

After the death of Zimmerman, she made a visit to Hanover, where she seems to have been received in the highest society, and to have been universally *fêted* and admired. She received especial kindnesses from a family of the name of Klein, who were irresistibly fascinated by the charms of her manner. During her residence there, she wrote the most affectionate letters to the suffering Maria Heckendorf, offering to pay the expenses of her illness, and recommending to her resignation to the inflictions of Providence.

Her return to Bremen, however, was less agreeable. She there found her creditors troublesome, and she administered poison in greater or less quantities to a variety of

people. One of the most lamentable cases was that of a young woman, a teacher of music, called Anna Myerholtz, who by her industry supported a blind father, eighty years of age. She attended the poor creature in her last agonies, and, when her eyes were closed in death, she opened her desk and carried away all the little savings she had accumulated for the support of her now desolate parent.

About this time, being in company with a friend at the theatre, who shed tears at the tragedy of Hamlet, she bade her "not weep, for, thank God, it was only a play!"

To attempt to enumerate the number of persons whose health she utterly destroyed, without absolutely killing them, would be tedious. Every offence or annoyance, however insignificant, was requited with a dose of arsenic.

Scarcely a person that came near her escaped when there was anything to be got by their deaths, though it were only a few dollars. Thus she despatched her good friend, Johann Mosees, who had lent her money, and wanted to marry her; her faithful servant, Beta Cornelius, who had laid by a little hoard of fifty dollars; and the worthy Mr. Klein, of Hanover, who had also assisted her with a loan to some considerable amount. Indeed, she poisoned the whole of Mr. Klein's family, but he alone died.

One motive for the crime which ultimately rid the world of this monster of wickedness, appears to have been despair. She began to apprehend that Mr. Rumpff suspected her. Indeed, at this time, she thought heaven and earth were leagued together to betray her; and it was satisfactory to learn that some of the agonies she had inflicted on others came home to herself at last. If a storm raged in the atmosphere, or a fire in the town, — if a river overflowed its banks, or the neighbors quarrelled

in the street, she thought she was the object of it all. She declared herself persecuted by the apparitions of her victims; and, strangely enough, sought refuge at the graves to which she had sent them.

But all this terror brought no repentance, not even surcease; she still administered her fatal drug, and took away the lives of two innocent children; one, the foster-son, and only consolation of her unhappy friend, Maria Heckendorf.

She was arrested for administering poison to Mr. Rumpff, on the sixth of March, 1828. On her trial, it was clearly established that she had sent fifteen persons out of the world: how many she had incapacitated for living in it with comfort, it was impossible to ascertain precisely, but at least as many more.

With respect to her means of procuring, without exciting suspicion, so constant a supply of arsenic as she used, she bought it in jars, in the form of ratsbane. On one occasion, some of this deadly mixture being offered for sale, when she was at Mr. Klein's, she affected not to know what it was; and, on being informed, she requested young Mr. Klein to purchase some for her, as she could not think of touching it herself.

Still, admitting her to have been the most consummate hypocrite that ever existed, her long impunity, and the success of her deceptions, seem incomprehensible. Not only did death follow upon her footsteps, but everybody died of the same malady and with similar symptoms. The persevering ill-luck that attended her, showing itself, however, in no shape but the mortality of her connexions, was a fact so remarkable that it had attracted general notice, and must have been known to many persons of discernment and intelligence in various grades of life;

still no glimmering of the truth aroused them to the investigation of so inexplicable a circumstance.

The art, too, with which she caused the withered and hideous skeleton which enclosed the demon within her, to assume the appearance of freshness and embonpoint, is almost equally extraordinary; knowing, as we do, how extremely difficult it is to make art look like nature, and how easily we discern the fictitious from the real, whether in hair, teeth, form, or complexion. Had London or Paris been the scene of Madame Gottfried's adventures, instead of the staid city of Bremen, we incline to think so valuable a secret would not have been permitted to die with her. Some enterprising artist would assuredly have purchased it by paying her counsel, and have thus secured his own fortune.

Besides the terrors she suffered from the supernatural visitations of her murdered friends, Madame Gottfried was tortured by all sorts of horrible imaginings. Aware of the universal abhorrence and execration of which she was the object, she feared that some strange and terrible death would be invented for her, — as that she would be bound to the bodies of her victims, and laid alive in the grave with them; or that she would be flung as food to some wild beasts that happened to be exhibiting in the town at the time.

One of her most trying moments was when she was shown her picture, painted as she really was, stript of all her rags and patches, in the prison dress. The only comfort she derived was from the observation that her nose was still handsome.

Madame Gottfried was not led to the scaffold till three years after her apprehension. She wished very much to die before the moment of execution arrived, and attempted to starve herself, but had not resolution to abstain from

food long enough for her purpose. She requested the attendants, in case they found her dead, "to bind up her mouth and wipe the death-damps from her face, that she might not look so hideous."

She was extremely afflicted when she saw the unbecoming dress she was to wear on the scaffold, and put it on with the greatest reluctance. She died a hypocrite, as she had lived, affecting a piety and repentance she evidently did not feel. When her head fell beneath the sword of the executioner, thousands of voices from the assembled multitude hailed the triumph of that earthly judgment which sent her to her great account before her Heavenly Judge.

Her head, preserved in spirits, and her skeleton in a case, are still to be seen in the Museum of Bremen.

MADEMOISELLE CLAIRON.

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MADEMOISELLE CLAIRON;

THE QUEEN OF THE FRENCH STAGE.

If there are certain existences more complicated, more romantic, more improbable, in a word, than any imaginary romance ever spun from the prolific brain of modern novelist, we may cite in the very first rank those of the French actresses of the past century. In that golden age of frivolity, the fair daughters of Thespis knew how to live; they might be likened to the grasshoppers of the sunny hour, which sing and dance through the live-long summer's day, without reflecting that November will come — November, with its cheerless days, its dreary, endless nights, its fogs, and rains, and frosts. The present race of actresses are of an entirely different stamp; they have learned by heart La Fontaine's fable, and more than one among them, like the ant, thinks only of winter during her golden days of spring. Like all moralists, La Fontaine has preached falsely so far as the stage is concerned; there it is not the ant, but rather the grasshopper, whose example is taught and followed, while the disciples of the fabulist form only the exception to the general rule.

It would require the pencil of a Watteau or a Vanloo faithfully to depict the careless frankness of Mademoiselle Clairon, — that queen of the French stage, — who stripped off all the petals from the flowers of life with regal ardor,

who was charming even in her follies, and who, after having lived for years as the spoilt and prodigal child of fortune, taking money with one hand to scatter it with the other, died at length as a sage, — poor, aged, solitary, and forgotten.

By following the career of this celebrated actress in her *Mémoires*, in the newspapers and journals of the day, and in the various published letters of the time, it is easy to discover, word for word, her strange and ever-shifting life, such, in short, as love and chance had made it. Let this article, then, be regarded only as a patient study over which fancy will not once come to shake the golden dust from off her radiant wings. But who knows if, in studying the life of a French actress, there is not more philosophy to be gleaned than in the history of a queen consort of France. For, whether the queen of the theatre or the queen of France is the more royal, who will venture to determine?

Mademoiselle Clairon (Claire, Hippolyte, Leyris de la Tude) was born at Condé, in Hainault, in the year 1723. We will leave her to relate, in her own words, the circumstances attending her birth, which circumstances, it must be allowed, were highly significant of her future career:

"It was the custom of the little city in which I was born, for all parties to meet together, during the carnival time, at the houses of the wealthiest citizens, in order to pass the entire day in dancing and other amusements. Far from disapproving of these recreations, the curé partook of them in company with his parishioners, and travestied himself like the rest. During one of these *fete* days my mother, who was but seven months advanced in pregnancy, suddenly brought me into the world, between two and three o'clock in the afternoon. I was so feeble that every body imagined a few moments would terminate

my career. My grand-mother, a woman of eminent piety, was anxious that I should be carried at once to the church, in order that I might there receive the rite of baptism. Not a living soul was to be found either at the church or the parsonage. A neighbor having informed the party that all the city was at a carnival entertainment at the house of a certain wealthy citizen, thither was I carried with all possible despatch. Monsieur le Curé, dressed as harlequin, and his vicar as Giles, imagining from my appearance that not a moment was to be lost, hastily arranged upon a sideboard everything necessary for the ceremony, stopped the fiddle for a moment, muttered over me the consecrated words, and sent me back to my mother a Christian, — at least in name."

It is amusing to see Mademoiselle Clairon, in her old age, philosophising over her past life, and giving utterance, upon the sayings and doings of her early years, to certain profoundly serious reflections. As an old woman she is as sententiously grave as she was inconsiderately gay in her youth; she lends an attentive ear to the whispered reminiscences of her heart, and she writes; she demands the secret of her life, and she endeavors to reply. After eleven reflections, each worthy of Socrates, she comes to this, the twelfth one: "In order to fulfil the duty imposed upon me by reason, to be in a state of judging myself, must I not go back to the principle of all? What am I? What have I done? What have I been in a condition to effect? Providence deposited me in the bosom of a poor bourgeoise, free, feeble, and ignorant; my misfortune preceded my birth.'

From this point starts *old* Hippolyte Clairon, with all the gravity of Jean Jacques Rousseau, to relate, in good set terms, the history of her past existence. In this narrative of her life we ever find philosophy predominating;

we feel that she had too frequently "assisted," as the French have it, at the suppers of the encyclopedists. Her manner of writing recalls her manner of acting; she preserves throughout, the solemn, pompous accent of the stage; in short, from the title to the conclusion of these singular memoirs, which, far from displaying, rather mask the writer, we discover not a single ingenuous expression, nor hear a single cry which seems to spring from the heart.

We are already acquainted with the circumstances attending the birth of Mademoiselle Clairon. Her mother, it would appear, had not only the misfortune to be poor; she was also ill-tempered, bigoted, and superstitious; a rigidly strict Roman Catholic, she endeavored to beat religion into her daughter, and would torment her youthful mind with pictures of hell and its endless torments. Poor little Hippolyte, although now a girl of eleven years of age, had never been allowed to play about out of doors with children of her own age; she was a little, pale, thin, Cinderella-like creature, debarred of all the amusements suited to her years, her sole distractions being limited to the perusal of two books, — the catechism and a prayer-book.

Madame Clairon, in order to be rid of her daughter during certain hours of the day, was accustomed to shut her up by herself in an unfurnished room at the top of the house, where she would leave her, with strict injunctions to ply her needle diligently. But Hippolyte, who was born a queen, as others are born servants, could never by any chance keep a needle between her fingers. What then, was she to do in her prison? "Suppose I open the window?" thought she. She made the attempt, but was unsuccessful; she could not reach the fastening; in despair, she climbed upon a stool, and pressed her face close to one

of the panes; as she was on the fourth story, her view was limited to the roofs, and chimney-pots, and garret-windows of the opposite houses. All at once a large window in front of her was thrown open, and a magical spectacle met her childish eyes. It so happened that the celebrated Mademoiselle Dangeville lived in the opposite house, and was at this precise hour taking a dancing lesson. "I was all eyes," writes Clairon in her *Mémoires*; "not one of her graceful movements escaped me. She was surrounded by the members of her family. The lesson over, every one applauded, and her mother tenderly embraced her. This contrast between her lot and my own filled me with grief, and my fast-flowing tears shut out the scene from my view. I descended mournfully from my perch, in order to give full vent to my sorrow; and when the throbbing of my heart had in some measure subsided, and I was able to regain my position, all had disappeared."

At first she could scarce believe the evidence of her senses; she imagined that all was a dream; she pondered in her mind what she had seen, and was sad and happy at the same time, in the thought that there were daughters in the world who were not beaten and locked up in garrets by their mothers, with no companions save a catechism and a prayer book. At these thoughts her tears would flow afresh; but soon, without wishing it, she began involuntarily to copy what she had seen, and danced and jumped about her little chamber, in humble imitation of the sylph-like motions of the beautiful Mademoiselle Dangeville. From this time forth her prison chamber became a paradise for her. She would procure herself to be locked up, on some pretext or other, every day; and as soon as the key was turned in the door, she would climb joyfully up to her post of observation at the window, and

remain there a motionless, silent, but enthusiastic spectator of the dancing lesson of her fair neighbor.

One evening, when there was some company at her mother's, she said to a gentleman who was chatting with her, "Tell me, sir, are there women who pass their lives in dancing?" "Yes," replied he, "actresses. But why do you ask?" She then related to him, mysteriously, what she had lately seen from her garret window. "I understand," said the visitor, "you have seen Mademoiselle Dangeville, who lives opposite." The gentleman turned then to her mother: "Madame Clairon," said he, "I must take your daughter, Hippolyte, with me to the theatre to-night." "To the theatre!" exclaimed Madame Clairon, in horror, "you might as well ask me to let her go to the kingdom of darkness at once." "Pardon me, madame, the mischief is already done; you have yourself unwittingly taken your daughter to the theatre by shutting her up in the garret, from the window of which she has seen Mademoiselle Dangeville rehearsing over the way." Scarcely had the visitor ceased speaking, when little Hippolyte, carried away by the force of her reminiscences, bounded into the middle of the room, and reproduced, with a fidelity absolutely astonishing, the pirouettes and entrechats of her fair original. Loud was the applause; and even her mother, who never laughed with her daughter, could not control her countenance. It was arranged that Hippolyte should go to the theatre the following night.

It was at the comedie Française that Mademoiselle Clairon made her entry into the world. For her the theatre was the universe entire; so great was her joy, so excessive her delight, so lively her astonishment, that, as she herself expressed it, she was afraid of going mad. Three weeks afterwards, this little girl, who was then but

twelve of years age, made her *debût* on the stage of the Theatre Italien, under the protection of Deshais. But the famous Thomassin, who had daughters to bring forward, ere long opposed the increasing success of our miniature debutante; and, strange as it may appear, a cabal was actually formed against the child, in order to obtain her dismissal from the "Italiens," where her delicate beauty and artless grace were the themes of universal admiration. On leaving the "Italiens," she obtained an engagement in the company directed by La Noul, at Rouen, to sing and dance, and play all the characters suited to her age.

After relating circumstantially this first period of her life, our philosophical actress pauses for reflection, and writes at the head of a page — RECAPITULATION. We should fail in our duty as historians were we to omit reproducing a portion of this curious page. "So far," she writes, "I have nothing to reproach myself with: I knew nothing, I could do nothing; I blindly obeyed a destiny, of which I have seen myself all my life at once the spoiled child and the victim." We are accordingly to understand from this that Mademoiselle Clairon could not escape those frequent deviations from the path of rectitude of which her career exhibits so many deplorable examples. According to her view of the matter, destiny — that convenient scapegoat of the worldly minded, the extravagant, and the gay — led her, despite herself, into all the faults and follies of which she in after life was guilty.

At Rouen, Mademoiselle Clairon had her laureate and her libellist united in the person of an individual by name Gaillard. As she herself expresses it, he possessed in an eminent degree the art of rhyming and supping-out, two indispensable qualifications in the eighteenth century. The salary of our heroine having been raised to about a

thousand crowns a year, her mother, Madame Clairon, began to ape the airs of a mistress of the house; she instituted a supper every Thursday night, to which were admitted all the wealthy admirers of her daughter. Gaillard used to season the *gigots* with madrigals, in which Venus and Vesta were treated in the light of ragged adventuresses when compared to Mademoiselle Hippolyte Clairon. Gaillard, however, did not content himself with singing the praises of the pretty actress; he dared to love her. After sighing for about six months, he succeeded in gaining over an old duenna, who, for a consideration, made him acquainted with all the turnings and windings of the house. One morning, while Mademoiselle Clairon was studying in bed, Gaillard penetrated to the chamber door, and exclaimed, in impassioned accents, that he was going to cast himself on his knees before her. Our actress, highly incensed that any one should dare to appear in her presence at such an unseemly hour, without more ado sprang out of bed, and armed with her anger and a trusty poker, unceremoniously drove the audacious madrigalist not only out of the room, but out of the house also. Gaillard, indignant at being thus treated by an actress whose adventures were already a matter of public notoriety, wrote his famous book — a book it must be admitted, utterly destitute of either style, wit, or vigor — entitled, *Histoire de Mademoiselle Fretillon*. Gaillard was amply and cruelly avenged for his ignominious treatment at the hands of Mademoiselle Clairon, for this disgraceful libel saddened her fairest years. His victim, however, was herself in turn avenged, for so violent was the outcry raised by the public against the author of the pamphlet, that he was compelled to seek safety in a hasty flight from the kingdom.

It would require a "forty author power" to follow our

heroine through all the scenes, adventures, and follies of her early years, a faithful narration of which would fill at least a dozen volumes, and would moreover, we fear, but little edify our readers. From Rouen, Mademoiselle Clairon proceeded to Lille, and from thence to Ghent, from which last-named town she was obliged to make a nocturnal flight, in order to escape from a British General who wanted, right or wrong, to marry her, and carry her off with him to England. At Dunkirque, whither she had fled for shelter from her ardent lover, she received, through the commandant of the place, an order to appear on the Parisian stage. Much had been spoken of Fretillon, and the gentlemen of the chamber judged, in their wisdom, that so pretty a girl should belong by right to the Parisians only. At the Opera she accordingly appeared as *Venus* in the opera of *Hesione*. Although an indifferent musician, she was much applauded, for in those days people applauded beauty as well as talent.

Shortly afterwards Mademoiselle Clairon quitted the Opera, and made her first appearance at the Comedie-Française in the part of *Phedre*. In the provinces she had played chiefly the *soubrettes*, and at the Comedie-Française, she was engaged to double Mademoiselle Dangeville. Previous, however, to signing her engagement, she declared, to the great surprise of the comedians, that it was her intention to perform the great tragic parts; to this request the comedians assented, stipulating merely that she should sing and dance in the musical pieces. They were all thoroughly convinced that she would be hissed on her *debût*, and hence be compelled to sing and dance only. It so happened that during her provincial career she had played four or five tragic parts. Marshal Sarrazin having accidentally seen her play the character of *Eriphile*, at Rouen, had predicted that she would one

day be the ornament of the French stage. She was anxious, most probably, to show the world that Sarrazin's judgment was a correct one. The comedians had indulged in many a hearty laugh at what they deemed the absurd pretensions of the proud Hippolyte. She disdained to rehearse her part; and on the morning of her *debût* she sent a message to the theatre to say that she was ready to appear, and only awaited the rising of the curtain. All Paris flocked on that evening to the Comedie-Française, in the expectation of having a hearty laugh at little Fretillon; but scarcely had she given utterance to the first few lines of her part when the entire audience rose enthusiastically; it was no longer little Clairon, the charming Fretillon who played the *soubrettes*, it was *Phedre* herself, in all her sovereign splendor, in all the majesty of passion. "How tall she is!" "How beautiful she is!" were the exclamations heard on all sides. From this time forth Mademoiselle Clairon was surnamed Melpomene, and became the idol of the Parisians.

The Comedie-Française was at that period so well administered, it possessed such intelligent protectors, that even the first subjects of the troop could scarcely live on their salaries. "We were poor," writes Mademoiselle Clairon, "and unable to await the payment of what was due to us, and every week we would vainly solicit M. de Boulogne, then Comptroller-General, for the payment of the arrears of the king's pension." But no one paid then, and Louis XV. less than all the rest. Thus we find that Mademoiselle Clairon, — the star of the Theatre Française, — owed to her beauty, and not to her talents, the Indian robes and diamonds which she wore. As she was fond of changing both her finery and her lovers, it would frequently happen that she would be left without either lovers or finery. One day Marshal Richelieu

called upon her to request the honor of her presence at one of his *fêtes*. She refused. "Why?" demanded the Marshal. "I have no dress to wear!" "You have dresses of all countries, of all tastes, and all fancies." "No more, I can assure you, than one single dress beside the one you now see on my back. Our scanty receipts have compelled me to sell everything valuable I could spare, and what remains is in pawn; I can only show myself on the stage."

Like all actors of true talent, Mademoiselle Clairon had more than one enemy who denied her influence over the public. The critic Freron declared that her stentorian tones deafened the ears without moving the heart. Grimm, who came to France during the height of the actress's triumph, spoke of the squeakings of her voice. "Squeakings, if you please," said Diderot, "but these squeakings, as you call them, have become the accents of passion."

It was about this period that Mademoiselle Clairon hired, at the rate of twelve thousand livres a year, the little house in the Rue des Marais, formerly inhabited by Racine. "They tell me," she writes in her *Mémoires*, "that Racine dwelt there for forty years with all his family; that it was there he died; and that after his time it was there lived and died the unfortunate Adrienne Lecouvreur. The walls alone of this house," I said to myself, "ought to suffice to make me feel the sublimity of the poet, and enable me to reach the exalted position of the actress. It is in this sanctuary that I ought to live and die." All the poets of the day visited Mademoiselle Clairon in "this sanctuary," which we very much fear was on several occasions somewhat profaned. The quiet family dinner which Racine had exhibited his good sense and taste in preferring to the dinner spread on the king's

table, was now replaced by the licentious *petit souper;* and the gay but frequently impure and even blasphemous *chanson*, was now heard in spots consecrated by the genius of Racine, where the poet had so frequently let fall his Alexandrines as from a golden harp.

Mademoiselle Clairon, however, had become the heroine of the Comedie-Française. She had, if not eclipsed, at least in some measure cast into the shade Mesdemoiselles Dumesnil, Gaussin, and Dangeville. She maintained her sceptre until 1762. This, it must be said, was the golden era of the French stage, for in addition to these four celebrated actresses, such names could be cited as Molé, Grandval, Bellecour, Lekain, Preville, and Brizard. Mademoiselle Clairon, with her solemn air and majestic gait, was the presiding genius of this brilliant republic — a republic of kings and queens. Others, it might be said, possessed either more talent or more beauty, but Mademoiselle Clairon possessed renown.

She reigned fifteen years.

In the year 1762, although now approaching her decline, she was still spoken of as a theatrical marvel. We find the following lines referring to her in Bachaumont's *Mémoires Secrets*, under the date of January 20th: "Mademoiselle Clairon is still the heroine; the mere announcement of her name is sufficient to draw a crowded house; so soon as she appears the applause is enthusiastic; her acting is a finished work of art. She has great nobility of gesture in the head; it is the Melpomene arranged by Phidias." The same journalist afterwards passes the entire troop in review with exquisite delicacy of touch. Take for example this note on Mademoiselle Dumesnil: "This actress drinks like a coachman; on the night she plays, her lackey is always in attendance in

the coulisses, bottle in hand, to slake her insatiable thirst."

In place of a lackey and a bottle of wine, Mademoiselle Clairon had in the green room an entire court of dissipated marquises, licentious abbés, and chirping poets. Marmontel, one evening, during a tavern supper, found her sublime. He was then a young scholar, rhyming tragedies, which the actors deigned to play and the public to applaud, out of respect for Voltaire, who had granted him a certificate of genius. He supped silently beside the eminent actress, thinking much more of composing a part for her than of speaking to her of love. "What ails you?" said Clairon to him all at once; "you are sad; I hope you are not offering me such an affront as to be composing a tragedy during our supper?" Marmontel had the wit to reply that he was sad because he was in love. "Child," replied Clairon, "is that the way you receive the gifts of your good genius?" "Yes, because I love you." "Well, then, fall on your knees; I will raise you, and we will love each other as long as we can." History does not inform us how long this attachment lasted, but it was not of very considerable duration.

The Marquis de Ximenes was also one of the adorers of the great comedian; they loved like the Arcadian shepherds and shepherdesses, but a single jest put Cupid to flight forever. Some one happened to say one night in the green-room of Comedie Française, that the Marquis de Ximenes had turned Clairon's head. "Yes," replied she, arriving at that instant, "*on the other side.*" The Marquis's love was not proof against this insult; the following day he returned the portrait of his inamorata, with these words written in pencil beneath it: "This crayon drawing is like human beauty; it fades in the sunshine. Do not forget that your sun has long risen."

Mademoiselle Clairon was not celebrated in France alone; all the foreign theatres summoned her by the voice of kings and queens. Garrick came to Paris expressly to see her play in *Cinna*. So delighted was he with the talent of the actress, that he caused a design to be engraved representing Mademoiselle Clairon arrayed in all the attributes of tragedy, her arm resting upon a pile of books on which might be read the names of Corneille, Racine, Crebillon, and Voltaire. By her side stood Melpomene, crowning her with laurel. The enthusiastic admirers of the actress were not, however, contented with this homage paid by one sovereign of the stage to another; they instituted the order of the medallion; medals were struck, bearing Garrick's device, and with these they decorated themselves as proudly as though they had borne the Grand Cordon itself.

Our heroine had now attained the culminating point of her renown. She ruled with despotic sway, not only the stage, but the world of fashion; and in speaking of Madame de Pompadour, the reigning favorite, she even dared to say, that "*she* owed her royalty to chance, while *I* owe mine to the power of my genius." In vain did her numerous enemies strive to oppose her triumphs by all the means in their power; she had only to show herself in order to baffle all their machinations. "In the world," wrote Diderot, "those who wished to ridicule her could not refrain from admiring her majestic eloquence." She carried her sceptre, too, with a high hand. One day, when she was playing at the Theatre Française, on the occasion of a free performance, given by order of the king to the Parisians, she came on the stage between the two pieces, and threw handfuls of money into the pit. The worthy Parisians were gulled by this piece of theatrical quackery, and cried, with enthusiasm, as they scrambled

for the silver, *Vive le Roi! Vive Mademoiselle Clairon!* She had braved Madame de Pompadour; she dared to brave the king himself, under the impression that the public would revolt rather than lose her. At her table she received the flower of Parisian society — such as Mesdames de Chabrillant, d'Aguillon, de Villeroy, de la Vallière, de Forcalaquier, etc. She was also a frequent guest at the tables of Madame du Deffant and Madame Geoffrin, who deigned occasionally to gather the pearls of her wit. The celebrated Russian princess, Madame de Galitzin, amazed at the talent of Mademoiselle Clairon, desired to leave her a regal souvenir of her admiration. "What will you have, Clairon?" asked she, one evening at supper. "My portrait, painted by Vanloo," replied the actress. The painter, flattered by this preference, was anxious that the portrait should be worthy at the same time of Madame de Galitzin, Mademoiselle Clairon, and himself; he painted the actress as *Medea*, holding in one hand a torch, and in the other a poniard, still reeking with the blood of her children. Louis XV. expressed a wish to see this picture; and, if we are to believe one of the newspapers of the time, he paid a visit one morning, for this express purpose, to the atelier of Vanloo. His Majesty highly complimented both the artist and his model. "You are fortunate," said he, to Carl Vanloo, "in having such a sitter;" and turning to Mademoiselle Clairon, "You are fortunate, Mademoiselle, in having such a painter to immortalize your features. It is my earnest wish to participate in this work; I am the only person who can put a frame on this picture worthy of it, and I desire that it may be as beautiful as possible; and further, it is my wish that this portrait be engraved." The frame cost five thousand livres, and the engraving ten thousand.

In the foregoing pages we have endeavored to chronicle the rise and progress of our heroine's grandeur; we must now, as faithful historians, relate the history of her decline and fall. Mademoiselle Clairon counted among her enemies Laharpe and Freron; Laharpe, because she had obstinately refused to play in his tragedies; Freron, because she had preferred Voltaire to him. Laharpe avenged himself with his tongue, Freron with his pen. About this period, a certain actress, by name Mademoiselle Doligny, was attracting notice at the Theatre Française; Freron protected her; he judged that the moment was a favorable one to delineate her portrait in contradistinction to that of Mademoiselle Clairon, and he did so accordingly. The first, in the opinion of the journalist, was a model of grace and sensibility; the second, an abandoned woman, destitute alike of heart, soul, or intellect. In Freron's journal, Mademoiselle Clairon was not alluded to by name, but she had the bad taste to recognize herself in the portrait drawn by the critic. Filled with shame and rage, she hurried to the gentlemen of the chamber, and threatened to withdraw from the theatre, unless instant justice was executed upon that horrible Freron. All Paris was in commotion; the king hastily summoned a meeting of his privy council, and a warrant was signed for the committal of Freron. The police-officers, according to order, came to seize his person. What could he oppose to the strong arm of the law? Our critic imagined a violent fit of the gout; he uttered cries of anguish, and declared that he could not move a finger without suffering tortures. This momentous affair occurred on the fourteenth of February, 1775; in a journal of the sixteenth, we find the following notice: "The quarrel between Freron and Mademoiselle Clairon, *alias* the pamphleteer Aliboron and Queen Cleopatra, makes a great noise, both at court and

in the city. Monsieur l'Abbé de Voisenon, having, at the solicitation of some friends of the former, written a very pathetic letter to M. le Duc de Duras, gentleman of the chamber, the latter replied to the abbé, whom he highly esteemed, that it was the only favor he believed it to be his duty to refuse him; that this request could be granted only at the personal solicitations of Mademoiselle Clairon." Glorious times were those, truly, when a journalist, a man possessed of more than one title to respect, could be threatened with imprisonment for expressing an opinion about an actress, or, what was an alternative much more humiliating, that he should owe his pardon to the actress whom he had offended! Sooner than submit to such degradation, Freron declared that he would suffer a thousand deaths. Strange as it may appear, this ridiculous affair was not only debated before the king, but was carried to the feet of the queen also. Marie Leczinska, who loved to show clemency, ordered that Freron should be pardoned, but Mademoiselle Clairon would not abide by the queen's decision; she declared to the gentlemen of the chamber that, if Freron were not punished, she would withdraw from the theatre. Awful was the commotion! Mademoiselle Clairon demanded an audience of M. le Duc de Choiseul, prime minister, which was graciously acceded. "Justice!" cried she, with her stage accent, as soon as the minister appeared. "Mademoiselle," replied the duke, with mock gravity, "we both of us perform upon a great stage; but there is this difference between us: you can choose your parts, and you have only to show yourself to be applauded; whilst I, on the contrary, have not this privilege, and, what is still worse, as soon as I make my appearance I am hissed; let me do my best or my worst, it is all the same; I am criticised, ridiculed, abused, condemned, yet, for all that, I remain at my post,

and if you take my advice you will do the same. Let us, then, both of us, sacrifice our private resentments to the good of our country, and serve it, each in our own way, to the best of our power. And, besides, the queen having pardoned, you can, without compromising your dignity, imitate her majesty's clemency."

In a journal of the twenty-first of February we read as follows: "The queen of the stage has held a meeting of her friends, presided over by the Duc de Duras, at which it was determined that M. de Saint Florentin should be threatened with the immediate desertion of the entire troop, unless speedy justice was done to the modern Melpomene for the insolence of Freron. This line of conduct has greatly disturbed M. de Saint Florentin, and this minister has written to the queen, stating that the affair has become one of the vastest importance; that for a length of time matter of such serious import has not been discussed at court (!) that in fact the court is divided into two factions on the question, and that, despite his profound respect for the commands of her Majesty, he much fears he will be compelled to obey the original orders of the king." In the end, however, Freron was saved from imprisonment by a combination of three circumstances, viz., the gout, which he had not, the clemency of Marie Leczinska, but chiefly because, *mirabile dictu*, Mademoiselle Clairon herself was sent to Fort l'Evêque!

In the annals of the French stage there a few stories more supremely ridiculous than that of the comedians in ordinary to the king, who, at the moment of commencing the performance, refused to play because his Majesty had added to the troop an individual whom they judged unworthy of being a member of their aristocratic body. Mademoiselle Clairon was at the head of this revolt also, but her star was beginning to pale in the theatrical firma-

ment, her crown of roses was beginning to show its thorns. On this occasion, the pit, exasperated to the highest point at not having its accustomed entertainment, angrily shouted, "*To prison with La Clairon!*" Her fate was sealed! The pit of a theatre is, for the actors, the Prætorian guard. This momentous event occurred on the fifteenth of April, 1775; on the ensuing day the papers contained the following announcement: "Astonishing fermentation in Paris! A special Privy Council has been held at the house of M. de Sartines, at which it was determined that the culprits in the late theatrical *emeute* should be sent to Fort l'Evêque. Mademoiselle Clairon receives the visits of the court and city." That very day, however, she went to Fort l'Evêque *before that rascal Freron*, to use her own expression to the Intendant of Paris. The next morning, Sophie Arnould related the story of her capture in almost these words: "Fretillon was in the height and glory of her receptions, playing the grand lady to the admiration of all, when an unannounced visitor made his appearance, in the shape of a police officer, who very unceremoniously desired her to follow him to Fort l'Evêque, by order of the king. 'I am submissive to the commands of his Majesty,' said she, with her usual pompous stage accent; 'my property, my person, my life are in his hands; but my honor will remain intact, for even the king himself cannot touch that.' 'Very true, Mademoiselle,' replied the alguazil, 'for where there is nothing, the king necessarily loses his rights.'"

At Fort l'Evêque, Mademoiselle Clairon found not a cell, but an apartment, which her friends, the Duchesses of Villeroy and de Duras and Madame de Sauvigny, had furnished for her with great magnificence. We read, in a journal of the twentieth of April: "Mademoiselle Clairon converts into a triumph a punishment which was intended

as a humiliation. A crowd of carriages besieges the gates of the prison; she gives, we understand, divine suppers; in short, is leading, at Fort l'Evêque, a life of princely luxury." This method of imprisoning actresses was not, it must be admitted, a very cruel one. One might say they kept open house, for there they received their lovers and friends, and supped from night till morning; and then, as the finishing stroke to this luxurious captivity, so soon as their incarceration became a little wearisome there was always to be found some accommodating physician, who would seriously declare that their lives were in danger. So it was in this instance; for, after a week's feasting, Mademoiselle Clairon was authorized, thanks to the certificate of the jail doctor, to return to her own house, where she was directed to consider herself a prisoner for the space of thirteen days more.

A deputation from the king and the gentlemen of the chamber, shortly afterwards waited upon her, to solicit her re-appearance on the stage of the Comedie Française, but she had still at heart the terrible words, "*To prison with La Clairon!*" "*La Clairon à l'hopital.*" "It is not," she said, "the king who ought to solicit my re-appearance at a theatre he never visits, — it is the public; I await the orders of the public." But the fickle public had had time, during the short absence of its former sovereign, to choose another queen; it chose two, indeed — Mademoiselle Dubois and Mademoiselle Raucourt — queens of a day, it is true, but still sufficiently regal to dethrone the ancient one. Mademoiselle Clairon, dreading forgetfulness like death, no longer willing to appear before a public that had adored her for twenty years only, took her departure from Paris. "I am ill," she said; "I am going to consult Tronchin;" but it was to Voltaire she went, and the little theatre of Ferney ere long rang with her stentorian accents.

She returned to Paris in the winter, and found winter everywhere; in her deserted house, among her forgetful friends, and also among her scattered lovers. She resumed, however, her former train of life, but the grain of sadness sown in her heart had germinated. In vain did she summon the *elite* of Parisian society to her exquisite *petits soupers;* in vain did she receive the oaths and protestations of M. de Valbelle, and line her carriage with silk, in an attempt to vie in luxury with the brilliant Guimard. She suffered deeply, for she had lost, at the same time, both her youth and her glory; she was fated to live, from henceforth, upon two tombs.

We will pass over in silence that portion of our heroine's life which she spent at the court of the Margrave of Anspach, a petty German prince, fashioned upon the model of Louis XV., who was accustomed to leave to his mistresses the care of his dominions, and who had offered her his heart and a share of his palace. Though her position at the Margrave's court was an equivocal one enough, it cannot be denied that during her sojourn there she did a great deal of good: debts, old and new, were gradually liquidated, taxes reduced, agriculture usefully protected, and the city of Anspach adorned with a monumental fountain; while the Clairon Hospital, one of her last gifts to the community, — the crowning grace of her numerous benefactions, — rendered her name universally beloved, by the poorer classes especially. Born thirteen years before the Margrave, she might almost have been his mother, and he, indeed, used to give her this title; but court intrigue was brought into play to dethrone the grey-haired Egeria, and, after a reign of seventeen years, she quitted forever the scene of her diplomatic labors, and returned once more to Paris, poorer, by a great deal, than when she left it. The illustrious actress, who formerly

had a coach and four, and had seen all Paris at her feet, now fell into the extreme of poverty. Mademoiselle Clairon, who had lived as a queen and a sultana, who never deigned to hold a needle in her fingers, and had seen all the grand seigniors of an entire generation humbly kissing the dust at her feet, found herself, at the age of sixty-five, reduced to the necessity of mending, with her own hands, her ragged dresses, of making her own bed, and sweeping out every morning the dust of her poor and solitary chamber. But, ever a woman of strong mind, she bore her poverty bravely; she turned philosopher, like all the rest of them in those days, and when some old friend or acquaintance chanced to call, she would, in conversation, live all her bright days o'er again.

By degrees, however, she met with some friends, and managed to scrape together some small portion of her scattered wealth. A worthy *bourgeoise* family took her under their protection, and a few rays of wintry sunshine illumined her declining years. Entirely engrossed with her philosophy, she wrote much, and more than one of her works is worthy of being placed beside those of J. J. Rousseau. In addition to her *Mémoires*, Mademoiselle Clairon wrote a prodigious number of letters; the Comte de Valbelle had received, for his own share alone, the enormous quantity of fifteen hundred. The loss of this correspondence is much to be regretted, if we may judge of it by the style of the small number of letters which remain, wherein the most captious criticism can scarcely discover a fault, either as regards expression, sensibility, or purity of style and language.

Her *Mémoires*, however, have had the widest circle of readers, and yet even this book, which was given to the world by the actress as a faithful narrative of her life, is far from being the accurate mirror she evidently intended

the public to suppose. Whether through delicacy, or through a fear of speaking the whole truth, she has concealed many acts of her life, and glided hastily and superficially over others. What made the most noise, however, in her book was the celebrated history of her ghost.

The ghost which tormented Mademoiselle Clairon appears to have been exclusively malicious, and to have been disturbed in his rest by disappointed love. He was a young man who had sought her society soon after her first brilliant success. She received him with intimacy, liked his society, gave him certainly some encouragement, relieved him from pecuniary difficulty when she had very little to spare, but refused to marry him under his most passionate and repeated entreaties. They had been acquainted about two years and a half, when the ill-starred lover, finding himself on his death-bed, implored her to grant him a last interview, a request which those who surrounded her, warmly seconding her own repugnance, prevented her from complying with. He died, attended by servants, and the only friend, a female whom he had latterly admitted to his confidence. On that same evening, as the clock struck eleven, Mademoiselle Clairon being at supper with a large party of friends, a dreadful cry was heard by all present, which she immediately recognized as the voice of her deceased lover, and fainted, with terror and emotion. For more than two years this same unearthly cry, which seemed to proceed from the empty air, was constantly heard by her, wherever she happened to be at the moment, and by all who were in company with her. In vain did the police make the most diligent search, thinking it might be either a trick or a conspiracy, but nothing ever transpired to shake the certainty of its being a supernatural visitation. Sometimes the sharp report of a gun or pistol

was substituted for the cry, accompanied by the loud and continued clapping of hands. This last demonstration she had been so long accustomed to, from the partiality of the public, that the effect was agreeable and consoling, rather than productive of terror. All this continued for the time we have already named, and on the last occasion there was an accompaniment of melodious music, as if the ghostly visitant was taking his departure in a friendly and reconciled state of mind. Not long after this, an elderly lady was announced and admitted to the presence of La Clairon, appearing before her as a perfect stranger. They sat down, and gazed on each other in silence, and with instinctive interest. At length, the old lady explained who she was, and the object of her visit. She was the friend of M. de S——, had attended him on his death-bed, and was now prompted by uncontrollable curiosity to see the woman whose cruelty had hastened his decease. After much circumlocution, and many explanations, "Mademoiselle," said the visitor, "I do not blame your conduct, and my poor friend fully admitted his obligations to you; but his unhappy passion mastered his judgment, and your refusal to see him embittered, while it accelerated, his last moments. His eyes were fixed upon the clock, anxiously watching the motion of the hands, when at half-past ten, his valet announced to him your positive refusal to come. After a short silence, he seized me by the arm, in a paroxysm of despair, which nearly deprived me of my senses, and exclaimed, 'Unfeeling woman! she will gain nothing by this; I will persecute her after death, as I have followed her throughout my life!' I tried to calm him, but he died as he uttered these dreadful words." Such is the account which Mademoiselle Clairon herself has left of this very singular episode in her history. She states the fact, without pretending to understand or account

for it, but modestly admits that she feels herself too insignificant to suppose that she could be selected as an object or medium of supernatural communication.

An actress who dies a devotee may well be compared to a boatman pulling lustily toward an unknown shore, upon which he ever keeps his back most pertinaciously turned. The actress rows all her life among shoals and quicksands, even in the heyday of her youth, nourishing a most unaccountable and petrel-like love of storms and tempests; but when in the evening of her days, she finds that her poor frail bark, in its shattered and leaky condition will no longer sustain her, but is ready at every wave to sink and leave her to her fate, she returns if there is yet time, and falls a kneeling suppliant on the shore. But Mademoiselle Clairon adopted a different mode of thought; she did not wish to die a devotee, on the plea that she dared not offer to her Maker a heart profaned during half a century by every human passion. One day a priest having set before her the example of Mary Magdalen, she replied that Mary Magdalen had repented in her youth, while she could still sacrifice at the foot of the cross many worldly thoughts, and hopes, and passions. She persisted, then, in dying as a philosopher; believing in God as the philosophers believed, — by the mind that reasons, not by the heart which feels, and believes, and loves. How true it is that "the world by wisdom knows not God!"

She died, at the mature age of fourscore years, in 1803, in the same year with her former rival, Dumesnil, in the parish of St. Thomas Aquinas. May she rest in peace!

HARRIET MELLON.

HARRIET MELLON;

THE ENNOBLED ACTRESS.

THERE was an ancient law in Egypt, by which the actions and characters of the dead were examined in the presence of competent judges, in order to determine what was due to their memory. A wise and wholesome provision for posterity's use! Such an existing law would make honest tombstones, and spare much monumental marble, while it benefited the cause of truth and virtue.

Without, however, any such law set down for us, our good and evil actions are subjected to an unerring judge on earth, which, as surely as the Egyptian scrutiny, will test and determine the quality and amount of every one's deeds "done in the flesh."

Of the subject before us, much has been hastily said and prematurely written, which, when tested by our "old common arbitrator *Time*," may be found erroneous, if not altogether false. The defects and merits of the Duchess of St. Albans have not been weighed by the even hand of one personally acquainted with either. Thus many of her public acts have been misquoted, and her sequestered habits dragged forward in a distorted shape, in order, as it would seem, to swell the catalogue of prejudices, cherished against her former profession, by those

> "Dread reformers of an impious age,
> The awful *cat-o'-nine-tails* of the stage,"

who invariably appear to forget that the errors of actors and actresses are but the errors of humanity.

The maternal grandfather and grandmother of "Harriet Mellon," as she was familiarly and indeed generally called "when she was *young and slim*," were of the humblest class of Irish peasantry, residing in Cork, and deriving, with their only child, a meagre subsistence from the cultivation of a small patch of ground annexed to their cabin. The husband dying, this *property* fell from the widow, who, with her daughter, was compelled to seek "the bit o' livin" elsewhere; the latter, a sharp-eyed, alert, and capable body, obtained admission into the family of a petty general shopkeeper, of course as executive-general in kitchen, parlor, and hall.

Sarah (we are obliged to stint ourselves to her baptismal appellation, her patronymic having escaped us) was, by nature and habit, admirably fashioned and fitted to her appointed duties; for, gifted as she was with a store of natal *brogue*, her pedal activity had never till then been cramped by any other, neither had her sturdy leg and sufficient ankle been straitened by the produce of the loom; while her knotted and combined locks had been little subjected "to paper durance," or the intrusion of a brush. In a state approaching to the naked simplicity of ancient Sparta, did this single-minded maid, in her country's phrase, "work her feet up to her knees" for her daily bread, when the lynx-eyed retailer of tobacco and tape, whose daily practice at her counter had given an accurate insight to general measurement, perceiving her servant's waist to be no longer like that of Prior's Emma, "fine by degrees and beautifully less," and that her maiden girdle proved too short, sent her back to her only

surviving parent, who, with a mother's love, which clings to her child when all the world has forsaken it, received her with open arms.

At this critical period an event occurred which tended, as Sarah in after life fancifully expressed it, *to give a coloring to her fate!* This event was the arrival of an itinerant troop of strolling players, bound for Wales, but landed by misadventure at Cork. Thus compelled from their course, they sought to supply the exigencies of a night's stay, and of their ensuing voyage, by performing in a barn, gratuitously granted them by a benevolent farmer, by whose favor our fair Milesian gained a seat at the intellectual banquet.

She was at this time just "rising" four and twenty, and naturally of a lively and sanguine temperament; but the dark passage in her own love's history had awakened her tenderest sympathy for others' woe, and the disastrous history of the ungentle Juliet, together with "the cunning of the scene," so moved Sarah's corresponding nature that something told her she was born for tragedy; and in this persuasion she retired from the scene of excitement to her closet. But there "no curtained sleep had she," partly, "because she had no curtains to her bed," partly, because the voice of her *destiny*, as she *believed*, was loud and clamorous, and only to be appeased by the resolution she formed of applying the next morning for admission into Mr. and Mrs. Kena's company, representing herself to be the widow of a Lieutenant Mellon. Those experienced and well-judging *managers* were in fact in want of an assistant *behind* rather than *before* the curtain, and seeing a sturdy and efficient aid in the plump, but active brunette before them, judiciously suggested to her, that as it was indispensably necessary that she should learn to *read* before she could fully enter into the study

of Shakspeare, she might for the present fill the then vacant departments of cook, house and nursery-maid, seamstress, stage-dresser, and *wardrobe-keeper*. The latter office being merely a *sinecure*, Mrs. Lieutenant Mellon did not deem the acceptance of it derogatory to the widow of an officer, (whose pension, we must assume, she was too proud to claim,) and the five first she was willing to perform *con amore, i. e.*, for love and provision; while, by a *little study*, she might be enabled, *some wet afternoon*, to read Shakspeare through, and so become competent to appear, in transatlantic phraseology, *upon the floor* of the respective barns in Wales, throughout which Mr. Kena's company was wont to "*travel*." All preliminaries arranged, our fair candidate for histrionic fame quitted her native land and only surviving parent forever. During her probationary state, she duly became a mother. A fine girl, born on the eleventh of November, 1777, being the fruit of her union with her lost Mellon, which event, with the subsequent cares attendant upon rearing the first-born, materially interfered with the Shakspearean *studies*, and indeed so retarded them, that she was compelled for the time to relinquish all thoughts of publicly contributing to the success of her employer's "concern," as it was not inappropriately called by its owners. In the year following the birth of the little *Harriet* (our henceforth heroine), a youth, *the* musician *per se* of the theatre, somehow contrived to secur the widowed affections of Mrs. Lieutenant Mellon. How he could presume to look so high for a wife, as the *widow of an officer*, and how she came to look so *low* — to use a favorite word of hers in after years — as the *orchestra* for a husband, we do not pretend to explain; but simply relate, that, although some years the young musician's senior, she married him; and thus,

as the undoubted wife of Mr. Entwistle, terminated the romantic portion of the late *Mrs. Lieutenant Mellon's* life.

Mr. Entwistle, though on a parity in matters of taste and pursuits, was far superior to his lady in point of education, and it followed, that in course of time the young husband bestowed upon his elder half what has been aptly termed "*a dangerous thing*," namely, a *little learning*. He taught her to read, but whether her attainments ever reached as high as the writing-desk, history has not revealed; but we believe all thoughts of furthering the interests of the drama, and upholding the fame of our inspired bard, through her agency, were relinquished. As for her "fatherless orphin," as she pensively termed her little Mellon, she so endeared herself to her young stepfather, that he undertook to instruct her in all he himself knew. This, to be sure, was not much, but in the eyes of her mother, *a load*. Although rescued thus early in life from a state of total ignorance, in which, left wholly with her mother, she must have remained, the poor little creature derived but few advantages from the union of a woman of coarse and uninformed mind with a man of vulgar and sottish habits.

We are not allowed scope enough in these pages for a detailed narrative of the vicissitudes of Miss Mellon's rise to womanhood, and of her progress in her profession: it must suffice to record her early initiation into stage mysteries in the little theatre alluded to, in *children's characters* (then much in vogue), and that she found herself, about the year 1789, a member of Mr. Stanton's small but respectable theatrical circuit, which included Stafford and other principal towns of the country. In the year 1793, the two members for Stafford, Sheridan and the Hon. E. Moncton, bespoke a play, on which occasion our heroine appeared in the character of *Letitia Hardy* and *Priscilla*

Tomboy. The honorable members paid her, at the close of the evening, an infinity of those time-serving compliments which were more the result of generous wine and habitual gallantry, than any solid conviction of the young actress's professional superiority. In short, Mr. Sheridan's intoxicating praise and fascinating manners produced a deep and abiding reliance in the minds of those interested; and his concluding *promise* of a London engagement was not forgotten by any of the party save *himself.* The senator returned to town, and thought no more of the Stafford actress, or of the hopes he had created; not so the object of his flattering promises, or her aspiring mother. As soon as possible they betook themselves to that seat of hurry, and goal of ambitious merit, London, presenting themselves and their hopes before the great man, who kept them in daily attendance and uncertainty until, their little stock of money being exhausted, they obtained letters from some of his constituents, urging his interest in his own theatre, in favor of their *protégée;* and on the ensuing October of 1793, Miss Mellon's name appeared, for the *first time* in a London play-bill, as something less than a *chorus singer!*

The truth is, Mr. Sheridan was at all times a *promising manager*, but as he was at no time a *performer*, he could not be expected to appreciate the feelings of the young actress. Again, therefore, poor Harriet had recourse to the influence of her Stafford patrons, who ultimately drew from Mr. Sheridan his tardy consent that she should have an *appearance part;* and, as her name had been blotted in the public eye, it was deemed expedient to announce her on the present occasion as *a Young Lady*, by theatrical interpretation rather an unpromising title to success. Thus Miss Mellon made her appearance as *Lydia Languish*, in Sheridan's own "Rivals," which, in effect, was but a

feeble effort, and the Staffordshire Thalia was turned back to mingle again with the chorus singers. In this undistinguished position the poor girl remained through the greater part of the season; clinging to the green-room and her hopes from night to night, subjected when at home to her dissatisfied mother's inhuman reproaches and abuse for her "*low*" and grovelling spirit in remaining in such a situation. "A *low* chorus singer, Harriet, and with such *high blood* in your veins!" Accident, however, proved Harriet's friend, in the absence of one of the minor performers, whose humble character was entrusted to her, and for the *first* time our heroine acted with the darling of Thalia, Mrs. Jordan. Fascinated, she returned home in a state of enthusiasm, and might aptly have exclaimed,

> "O, mother!
> A lightning flash has dazzled me, and never
> Can those eyes see true again!"

for from that hour she began to fashion herself by the model before her, and, like other young actresses of her time, became a close copy, not a *resemblance*, for

> "None but herself could be her parallel."

By such fortuitous means, Miss Mellon crept into favor with the management and the public; to which, in candor it must be added, her fine person and handsome face principally recommended her; while, at the same time, her attentive study and tasteful costume were not unappreciated. In like manner she rose to a very creditable position in her profession. If not at any period great, she was always correct and agreeable; whilst her ingenuous manners and strict propriety behind the scenes, together with her well-known filial adherence to her mother, under

all circumstances, caused her to be beloved and commended by all who knew her.

We come now to a period of Miss Mellon's history when several events occurred, which controlled much of her after life. She became acquainted with a young female, nearly of her own age, the daughter of a respectable, but decayed tradesman, handsome, gentle, sensible, and well educated. The friendship of these young people was little less sudden and ardent than that of the romantic ladies in Mr. Canning's "Rovers," and led to an acquaintance which became the medium of an attachment of a still more tender nature. A Mr. B—— had become enamored of the blooming Harriet, who frankly gave him her love in return. This gentleman, though confessedly not rich, had "*great expectancies;*" but when did true love — first love, *woman's* love — think of any riches beyond the heart's treasure? The rising actress was in the receipt of a rising salary, and this, with love, was all-sufficient — at all events until the rich relation, to whom Mr. B. was heir, died. Though the gentleman had been openly introduced in Little-Russell street, the under-plot of the drama was conducted with all the secresy which novel-reading misses of the day — when the Minerva Press flourished, and inculcated anything but wisdom — delighted to practise. But, independent of this *Lydia Languish* propensity for deceiving friends and relations in matters of the heart, Harriet Mellon knew well that her mother's views were opposed to any change, and least of all, such change as a penniless husband could give, or that could interfere with the exclusive system of domination she had hitherto practised over her daughter. Concealment was, therefore, imperatively necessary, but became no longer possible. Mrs. Entwistle discovered the attachment, and her fury knew no bounds. She knew that the unfortunate lover

had neither present means nor expectant wealth, and of this she convinced her daughter, who, in a transport of indignation, immediately dismissed him; not because he was *poor*, but because a woman's heart can forgive all things save deception in the man she loves; and when, like the daughter of Tilbury's Governor, she cried, "Duty, behold, I am all over thine!" it was more in resentment at her lover's disingenuousness, than from any diminution of her attachment to him. Notwithstanding the apparent indifference with which poor Harriet bore this disappointment, there is little doubt but that it was severely felt. Meanwhile, the influence of her favorite increased daily, and that of the queen mother as gradually decreased; hence ensued enlarged squabbles, and outbursts of the demon *Temper*, in which it is to be feared "her Harriet" bore her part with a tolerable grace; the hitherto implicit obedience was no longer yielded. About this time Mr. Entwistle, who had been engaged in the orchestra at Drury-lane as a "second violin" (for he had ceased after his marriage to play *first* fiddle), was for some irregularity discharged from his situation; his totally unemployed life afforded leisure for still greater indulgence in intemperate habits, and his step-daughter felt that, "though she was bound to him as her kinsman, she was nothing allied to his disorders." Finding that neither husband nor wife could separate themselves from their misdemeanors, she finally proposed a separation of persons and interests.

Mrs. Entwistle was utterly astounded—

> "When on our heads it brings the ceiling,
> The base begins to show its feeling."

Her selfishness was touched to the quick by "her Harriet's" vigorous assumption of power, yet, let it be hoped in charity that, odious as this woman was, she may not

have been utterly selfish; something of the mother, at a moment of purposed separation from an only child, possibly, nay, probably, struggled with her otherwise unfeminine character; and, as it is said that every metal contains some quantity of gold, so some spark of goodness may be extracted from the hardest nature.

Her daughter, however, had now reached that period of life — a fatal period it often proves — when young ladies begin to believe that they are able to judge and act for themselves, and exhibited to her mother a decision of character and force of will little inferior to her own.

A great statesman once declared that the secret of human government is *a majority*. Miss Mellon, acting upon this principle, called to her aid her newly-made friend and ally, and the twain unitedly so placed the matter before her mother that she was almost silenced. In fact, she felt herself in the *minority*; it was two to one against her, and after one or more experimental struggles to regain dominion over her lost throne, prudence warily took her by the ear and whispered submission to what she could not prevent.

Thus emancipated from domestic thraldom, the first use Miss Mellon made of her liberty was to domesticate her young friend with her, in Little-Russell street, and friendship, in its most enthusiastic form, succeeded the brief reign of early passion. This continued for upwards of twelve years, when it died a sudden and violent death.

About the period of Mr. and Mrs. Entwistle's departure from their daughter's roof, an old gentleman, sordidly dressed, and of meek deportment, was seen occasionally in the green-room of Drury Lane Theatre, in common with more noble and distinguished *habitués*. In course of time he was observed to enter Miss Mellon's humble

dwelling, and it being known that the rich banker frequently visited the friends, malice insinuated that

> "Old as he was, for ladies love unfit,
> The power of beauty he remembered yet."

Day by day new slanders were circulated, until Miss Mellon's patron being informed of the injurious impressions against his *protégée*, his friendship took a more candid and decided course, and he did, at last, what it is to be regretted he did not do at first, — introduced her to his daughters, the Marchioness of Bute, the Countess of Guilford, and Lady Burdett, (matrons of unspotted fame,) who, with their families, thenceforth exhibited the most public and friendly regard for her.

> "The snake was scotched, not killed."

That Mr. Coutts entertained aught but a paternal regard and friendship for Miss Mellon, no person who really knew her or him ever believed; and there is but little doubt that unjust and unfounded surmises first suggested the result which probably had never been thought of by either party. However this may be, the period at length arrived which made these odds all even. Mrs. Coutts, who had long been in a state of helpless imbecility, expired suddenly from an accident; and in the February of the following year, 1815, Miss Mellon withdrew from the stage, after performing the character of *Audrey* in "As You Like It," without any intimation of her intention so to do, other than a friendly whisper to Mr. Bannister — the *Touchstone* of the night — that it was the last time she should appear with him in public. In this abrupt and unexpected manner, after twenty-one years upon the London stage, ended Miss Mellon's professional career, and on the second of March following the

public journals formally announced the marriage of "Miss Mellon of Holly Lodge, Highgate, to Thomas Coutts Esq."

And here let us disabuse our readers of a capital error in relation to Miss Mellon's first acquisition of wealth, the famed *lottery ticket*. Previous to, and at the period of Mr. Coutt's first intimacy with Miss Mellon, she was fond of speculating in the lottery. Like many other people of narrow means and sanguine temperaments, she suffered her hopes continually to dwell on the expectation of gain from this source, and never failed, however difficult to procure the means, to expend, annually, small sums in the purchase of shares; a characteristic reliance on dreams, and other auguries, which suggested *lucky numbers*, keeping ever alive the hope of ultimate success. The manner in which these hopes were cherished, and the disappointments surmounted, amused Mr. Coutts exceedingly. His kind heart, seconded by his ample means, suggested a stratagem by which to augment his young friend's present comforts, and ensure a solid continuance of them. He proposed to her old friend, Mr. Wewitzer, who was often present at the banker's visits, a plan by which his wishes might be gratified, without exciting the scruples or wounding the delicacy of Miss Mellon. It was to persuade her to make one large venture in place of the many small ones which so dissipated her money, and by the purchase of a whole ticket, bribe Fortune to be kind, and turn the wheel in her favor. With some difficulty this ruse succeeded. Wewitzer was, as usual, sent to make the purchase with the accumulation of some weeks' deduction from her salary; and in the course of time *the ticket*, to all intents and purposes, proved *a prize*! Mr. Wewitzer, the lucky agent, received the money, which he paid to his delighted young friend in new bank notes; and she, who had never possessed more than a few guineas at

one time, saw herself mistress of thousands! After the first burst of joy had subsided, she exultingly placed the suddenly-acquired wealth before her patron, begging him to direct her in the best manner of investing it; and after taking a small portion from the amount for present occasions, she placed the rest in the hands of him from whom she had unconsciously received it. This history is given on accredited authority, as delivered by Mr. Wewitzer a few days before his death, when he had failed in a last appeal to Mr. and Mrs. Coutts to relieve his wants.

In respect to the date of this marriage, it must be admitted that Mr. Coutt's advanced age and precarious life rendered hazardous any delay in making such provision for his *protégée* as could only be enjoyed by *his widow*, without perpetuating the slanders previously put forth against her by their long intimacy. The injury suffered by Miss Mellon in consequence of her benefactor's liberality being considered, it was not unnatural on her part to feel an anxiety to be secured against future malice and contingencies by an honorable title and fortune. But in the many acts of inconsistency which undoubtedly sullied the character of *Miss Mellon*, *Mrs. Coutts*, and the *Duchess of St. Albans*, not one of her discarded dependants or confidants ever attempted to impugn the moral conduct of their capricious patroness.

During the first year of Miss Mellon's marriage, Mrs. Entwistle, happily, as we must think for her daughter, died. Her maternal merits were rewarded by a costly funeral, and perpetuated by a *second* monument erected some years after by "*her affectionate daughter, Harriet, Duchess of St. Albans.*"

As soon as Miss Mellon's marriage was proclaimed, she was assailed by a host of venal scribblers

"Whose praise brings no profit, and whose censure no disgrace."

Their base attempts to extort money from the fears to which new-born honors are subject, acted upon the mind of Mrs. Coutts, at first, with full effect; but judicious advisers happily restrained her impulsive resentment and withheld her from refuting their calumnies.

Mrs. Coutts now made many additions and embellishments to her favorite villa, *Holly Lodge*, subsequently the scene of so many gorgeous festivities, in which even royalty did not disdain to participate. But her vast expenditures were not lavished on the rich and noble only; hers was not the

"Proud luxury that lets not its bounty fall
Where Want needs some, but where Excess begs all."

Her charities were widely and liberally diffused; often spontaneous, though perhaps somewhat scenic; — her nature was essentially dramatic, and she loved to try *effects*, by surprising those whom she benefited; the publicity given by them to her bounties naturally subjected her to the charge of ostentation.

Mrs. Coutts had been married seven years, when her aged husband's infirm frame began to give indications of decay, which threatened speedy dissolution. During the period of his last illness, she attended him with the most sedulous and unremitting care, administering his medicines, soothing his pains, cheering his descent into the grave, and assuredly doing the utmost to

"Husband out life's torpor at the close
And keep the flame from wasting."

He died in March, 1822, in the presence of his daughter and Mrs. Coutts, to whom he bequeathed his

enormous wealth, putting the whole strength into one giant arm to use "as humors and conceits" might direct, having recorded his conviction that "her goodness would not fail to do for his family more than they expected *or he wished.*" (!)

Throughout the two years next succeeding his decease, the wealthy widow gracefully withdrew from public notice, and mourned her aged partner with every appearance of sincerity. During this period, several men of family who had "sickened their estates," and were willing to make the rich widow their physician, became suitors for her hand, and amongst other candidates, the Duke of York was named, but we believe erroneously.

In the year 1824, Mrs. Coutts emerged from her "weeds." The first memorable result of her re-appearance in society was her introduction to Lord Burford, then in his twenty-third year, and just returned from his travels. Death once more opened the portal of advancement to this favorite of Fortune; for the next year, 1825, the Duke of St. Albans died, when Lord Burford, the successor to his wealth and title, with his sister Lady Charlotte Beauclerk, accompanied Mrs. Coutts on a visit to the birthplace of her late husband. On the sixteenth of June, 1827, Mrs. Coutts became a Duchess. Arrived at the pinnacle of her earthly ambition, wedded to an amiable, young, and exceedingly handsome nobleman, *her Grace the Duchess of St Albans* became "the observed of all observers." She continued to dispense her charities with the same liberality, but with more discretion than at the time when she first acquired wealth. Her establishments were magnificent both in town and at Holly Lodge; noble and intellectual guests were the recipients of her hospitalities, and were alike lavish in

their praises of the graceful courtesy and fascinating conversation and manners of their gifted hostess.

When the manifest disadvantages of Harriet Mellon's early life are remembered, — living, as she did, under the control and example of a debased and illiterate mother, — little, if any, expectation could be entertained of her becoming superior to her guide in either mind or morals. From infancy to womanhood her mind was

"A wild where weeds and flowers promiscuous shoot."

It had neither the advantage of early regulation nor after-culture. At the period when, temper-tried and heart-worn by the despotic and unfeminine turbulence of her mother, she assumed self-conduct through a world, of the usages of which she was still in utter ignorance, she was a lovely, pure, kind, and ingenuous creature, — little disposed to scrutinize the feelings which governed her rather than she them, — and yielding to their impulse, right or wrong. This fatal defect lay at the foundation of all the mistakes of her life. The continuous state of *autocracy*, so to speak, in which she existed from the moment she cast aside the domestic oppression under which she had so long suffered, was such as few untutored minds could maintain with grace and approval; and, although it might have been expected that the hateful example of her mother's controlling will would serve as wholesome warning to her victim, she did not profit by the fearful lesson. How often is the enfranchised slave a tyrant master? As the wife of Mr. Coutts, she occupied a queenly attitude. Surrounded by people who "fed her every minute with words of sovereignty," she became inordinately self-endeared. With a partial husband, more than forty years her senior, in whose time-enfeebled judgment she was perfection's self, — the errors of a

defective education became engrained in her very existence. Possessed of unlimited wealth and power, like a petted child, she grew fractious from the very satiety of indulgence; she was *not a happy woman*. Harriet Mellon in her poverty, when she had little save her good spirits to feed and clothe her, was happier than Mrs. Coutts, "whose state sumptuous, showed like a continual feast." One by one she had thrown from her those upon whom her young affections had been grafted, — but the undying memory of her first and only love,

"The shadow of whose eyes were forever on her soul,"

clung to her in the midst of her prosperity, and turned the edge of contentment. Much as she might regret the loss of friends, severed from her by her own rash hand, she gave no sign of repentance by word or act; fully persuaded that, like the King, her sovereignty could do no wrong. She piqued herself upon her justice, forgetting that to be always rigorously just, we must sometimes be unjustly cruel. One of her prominent errors was, that she never forgave a personal offence. This arose from an over estimate of *self*, and of what was due to her position. She deeply felt that, previously to her marriage, she had partially incurred, without forfeit of her chastity, the ill repute that should only attend the loss of it, and vainly strove to avenge herself of the world's injustice by treating its opinions with contempt, — thus adding one more to the long list of those who have been the voluntary victims of a mournful fallacy. Sometimes attended by "Pickthanks and base newsmongers," her too credulous ear was poisoned by many a leprous distilment, her generous inclinations checked, and her judgment perverted. With these admitted failings, both as Mrs. Coutts, and the Duchess of St. Albans, she assuredly possessed some brilliant and

admirable qualities: prominent among them was her active benevolence, by which "the poor were clothed, the hungry fed."

Beyond her charitable deeds and the support of her state, she had no regard for money; and although, with such enormous riches, it would have been criminal not to bestow its bounty on the needy, yet due praise should not be withheld for that which is not always the result of power and riches; and, although it may be that she sometimes too loudly proclaimed her beneficence, yet there were occasions when she could do good by stealth. However much ill-nature may suspect her motives, it cannot deny that the example she set to others was one of no mean value in a sordid world.* Among her many good qualities, probity in money matters distinguished her from her earliest years, before riches rendered it easy to be just. Her strict regard to truth formed another valuable trait in her character. While she prominently exhibited what has been aptly termed the "politeness of kings," she was *punctuality personified*—a quality to be placed among the minor morals of life; *she never kept anybody waiting*, tried the spirits, or wasted the time of an expectant, however humble.

With much natural wit and more humor, she had but an indifferent faculty for intellectual attainments. Owing to the want of early directions in her choice of reading, which was desultory and frivolous, she had a rabid appetite for vulgar marvels and supernatural horrors. In this particular, the defective education of Harriet Mellon was

* It was not known until after the death of the Duchess of St. Albans, that she had for many years granted life-annuities to several aged actresses whom she had known in early life, and whose infirmities had forced them to retire from their profession without adequate means of support. *One* such act should obliterate the remembrance of a thousand foibles.

not rectified by Mrs. Coutts or the Duchess of St Alban's. With much native energy of mind, she cherished extraordinary weaknesses. She held implicit faith in spectres and goblins; and a ghost story, or a substantial murder, which, when not orally related, she sought for with avidity in old calendars and obsolete magazines, was to her mind of all-engrossing interest. She was superstitious in all things; —dreams were to her presages; omens and signs gave her frequent inquietude; and the *evil eye* and *fetches* of her mother's country received her entire credence. She pinned her faith upon a horse-shoe nailed upon the outer gate; while the drilling of a hole at the narrow end of an egg-shell, after its contents had been eaten, in order to exclude wicked fairies from haunting the hen-roost, was a precaution in no wise to be neglected. †

"Beauty is a mighty empire," but it lasts not long. Those who saw the Duchess of St. Albans only in her later years, could have but a faint idea of her early attractions. In person she was tall, and finely-formed, but

> "What powerful hand can hold Time's strong foot back,
> Or who his spoil on beauty can forbid?"

She gradually acquired a fulness which afterwards, in its excess, became ungraceful *bulk*.

Her countenance had an oriental conformation; — the features were small, — she had dark bright eyes and deeply fringed lids, — a delicate nose, well-shaped mouth, with white and regular teeth, — clear and blushing skin, (polished even to shining) — and fine black hair waving

† We once saw Miss Mellon retire in great agitation from a dinner-table where thirteen people were about to be seated, and with a flushed face insist upon eating her dinner upon a side-table, in despite of the ridicule and laughter which she excited thereby.

in natural curls, — yet with all these appliances her countenance was unsusceptible of varied expression. A heavy frown and a sunny smile constituted all its meaning when not in repose; but a modest dropping of the eyelids from time to time, while speaking, produced a most fascinating effect upon the listener.

As we have said, her powers as an actress were not brilliant; with a naturally clear and full-toned voice, her determined imitation of Mrs. Jordan gave to it still greater fulness. She never, we believe, donned the doublet and hose, although her figure could not have been objectionable. The best of her lady characters was that of *Volante*, in "The Honeymoon," originally acted by her; but her appearance was more engaging in simple than in elegant costume, for her figure when in motion was not graceful.

In the summer of 1837 the Duchess' constitution gave indications of considerable change. A nervous excitement, which it was difficult to allay, a continuous pain in the right side, a gradual increase of fever with general debility, told of much to fear and little to hope. These symptoms augmented, and she became day by day more and more restless, and, at length, altogether dispirited. She removed from Stretton street to Holly Lodge; but no acquisition of strength awaited her there; and after visiting mournfully every part of her favorite abode and its surroundings, she desired to be taken back to Stretton street in order, as she said, to die on the same bed, and in the same apartment, where her benefactor breathed his last. Thither she was of course conveyed. It had been her frequently-expressed hope that she might die on a Sabbath, and her hope was realized; for on Sunday the sixth of August, after eight weeks of intense suffering, which she endured with unwonted patience and religious resignation, while supported on the arm of her noble

husband, "she gave her honors to the world her; immortal part to Heaven."

The Duchess' will is registered where all may read. It is a curious document, of which the text forms its own commentary. She made her first husband's grandchild her heiress, whose fortune amounted, it was said, in cash, to £1,800,000.

MADEMOISELLE LENORMAND;

THE FORTUNE-TELLER.

The French have been accused of incredulity and want of faith in matters of high and weighty import. How far this may be true we are not now about to inquire; but the sum of five hundred thousand francs, amassed by Mademoiselle Lenormand, the celebrated fortune-teller, testifies strongly to the credulity of the nation on subjects a want of faith in which might justly be defended. And that credulity, strange to say, was manifested at a time when what were called the fetters of ancient superstition were cast aside by a large portion of society. Moreover, in the character of this far-famed prophetess there does not seem to have been any remarkable elevation, or any great display of intellect. A few fortunate coincidences, an unbounded self-confidence, and considerable shrewdness, were the groundwork of her fortunes, and served to call forth, in a singularly striking form, the weakness of many of the most celebrated characters of the last half century; though it must be acknowledged that her own countrymen alone were not the dupes of her imposture.

The father of Mademoiselle Lenormand was of Falaise; but, having married a Mademoiselle Guilbert, of Alençon, he established himself in the latter city, where the celebrated fortune-teller was born, besides a younger sister,

and a brother, who entered the military service. M. Lenormand died young, and his widow, who re-married, did not long survive her second nuptials. The second husband also soon consoled himself for his loss, and took another wife; by which event Mademoiselle Lenormand, her brother and sister, became dependent on the care of a father and mother-in-law; who, to be rid of a young family which did not belong to them, placed the daughters in a convent of Benedictine nuns in the town, from whence, when they had learned all that the good sisters could teach, they were removed to that of the Visitation; and so on through all the convents of Alençon in their turn, after which the future prophetess was apprenticed to a milliner. It was in the house of the Benedictines that Mademoiselle commenced her vocation, by predicting that the superior would soon be deprived of her office; for which ill-boding the young lady was subjected to punishment, and underwent a penance; but the event soon justified the prediction. She continued the career she had begun by announcing the name, age, and various other particulars respecting the successor of the deprived abbess. There were at the time many candidates for the office, and the ultimate decision remained in doubt and abeyance. Verifying at length the truth of the oracle, it confirmed the pretensions of the damsel to a supernatural power of revealing the events of futurity. But the town of Alençon was too confined a theatre for her aspiring disposition, and the needle too ignoble an instrument for one who aspired to wield the wand of prophecy. She persuaded her mother-in-law to send her to Paris, where her stepfather was then residing; and at fourteen years of age Mademoiselle Lenormand started for the metropolis, with no other worldly possessions than the clothes on her back, and a

piece of six francs in her pocket, given to her by her maternal guardian.

Arrived in the great city, her father-in-law obtained for the young adventuress a place in a shop, where she soon gained the good-will of her employers, and *la grosse Normande* became a universal favorite. One of the clerks undertook to instruct her in arithmetic and book-keeping, and gave her some knowledge also of mathematics. Pursuing her studies with great industry, she soon surpassed her instructor, and resolved, after a time, to gain the means of subsistence by her own exertions, and in a manner congenial to her habits and inclinations. To this end she established in the Rue de Tournon a *bureau d'ecriture*, which succeeded well, and where she continued to exercise her vocation as a prophetess till the time of her death, in 1843. Her success enabled her, after a time, to bring about for her sister such a marriage as she desired, and to promote her brother in his military career. It was towards the end of the reign of Louis XVI. that Mademoiselle Lenormand commenced practice. She found the troubles of the times, which unhinged the minds of all around her, and filled them with alarm and anxiety, very propitious to her views. The unfortunate Princess de Lamballe, whose untimely fate she predicted, was one of her frequent visitors; and she possessed a letter from Mirabeau, written from his prison at Vincennes, in which he intreated her to tell him when his captivity would cease. The revolution followed, and applicants for the benefit of her oracular powers increased. Alarmed at the rapid progress of events, and rendered superstitious by their fears, crowds of anxious inquirers flocked to the Rue de Tournon, under various disguises, which it required no great shrewdness or talent to discover. It was at this time that two French guards, who had joined the crowd

in the attack on the Bastile, visited the celebrated reader of futurity: to one she predicted a short but glorious military career, and an early death by poison; to the other the baton of a mareçhal of France. The former was afterwards General Hoche, whose untimely fate fulfilled the augury: the other the celebrated Lefebvre. The Compte de Provençe (afterwards Louis XVIII.), on the night of his flight from Paris, sent to consult the sybil of the Rue de Tournon previous to his departure.

During the reign of terror, Mademoiselle Lenormand continued for some time undisturbed in the exercise of her divination, and was visited one evening by three men, who demanded, with smiles of evident incredulity, to learn their future destiny. On examining their hands attentively, she became greatly agitated, probably knowing the parties she had to deal with; they encouraged her, however, to speak without fear, as they were ready, they said, to hear whatever doom she should pronounce. For some time she remained silent, and continued to examine the cards apparently with great attention, but evidently under considerable excitement; yielding at length to their encouragement, she foretold their destiny, and, tragic as it was, her visitors received the prophecy with shouts of incredulous laughter. "The oracle has failed for once," observed one of them; "if we are destined to destruction, we shall at least fall at the same time; it cannot be that I should be the first victim, and receive such splendid honors after death, whilst the people shall heap your last moments with every possible insult." "She slanders the citizens, and should answer for it at the tribunal," observed the youngest of the party. "Bah!" replied the third; "the dreams of prophecy are never worth regarding." The death of Marat, one of the inquirers, soon after, confirmed the first part of the prediction; and the completion of the

second alone saved the prophetess from destruction, she being incarcerated when Robespierre and St. Just, the other two visitors, met the destiny she had foretold to them. How it chanced that the science of Mademoiselle did not guard her against the danger in which she was involved, is nowhere recorded. Occupied, we must suppose, with the destiny of others, she seems to have neglected to read her own, and fell into perils she might otherwise have avoided by examining the lines in her own fair palm, or dealing out the cards for once for her own information and instruction. Yet that she really had faith in her own power of divination, seems to be proved by her conduct with regard to her brother, who, as has been stated, was in the army. Receiving intelligence that he was severely wounded in an engagement, she never ceased seeking, by means of the cards, to know the state of his health; and at length, after having passed a night in various cabalistic researches, she was found in the morning by her attendant bathed in tears, and gave orders for mourning, having ascertained, she said, that her brother was dead; which was soon afterwards confirmed by the arrival of letters.

After the reign of terror, the celebrity of the prophetess continued to increase. Barrère was one of her constant visitors. Madame Tallien seldom allowed a week to pass without availing herself of her supernatural powers. Barras frequently sent for her to the Luxembourg. From the access she had to the leaders of all parties, it required no great skill in divination to predict many of the events which took place at that time. The empire was, however, the season of her richest harvest. Josephine, as is generally known, was a firm believer in auguries and prophetic intimations. The early prediction of her future greatness, and its termination, has been so frequently

repeated, without receiving any contradiction, that it has become a fact which no one questions, and would easily account for the firm faith she reposed in the oracles of Mademoiselle Lenormand, to whom she constantly sent to ask, amidst other questions, explanations respecting the dreams of Napoleon; and when the latter projected any new enterprise, the empress never failed to consult the reader of futurity as to its results. The disasters of the Russian campaign, it is said, were clearly predicted by Mademoiselle Lenormand; and it was from her also that Josephine received the first intimations of the divorce which was in contemplation, which premature revelation, unfortunately for the authoress, procured for her an interview with Fouché, who, on her being introduced, inquired, in a tone of raillery, if the cards had informed her of the arrest which awaited her? "No," she replied; "I thought I was summoned here for a consultation, and have brought them with me;" at the same time dealing them out upon the table of the minister of police without any apparent embarrassment. Without mentioning the divorce, Fouchè began to reproach her with many of the prophecies she had lately uttered, and which, notwithstanding the kindness she had received from the empress, had been employed to flatter the hopes of the royalists in the Faubourg St. Germain. Mademoiselle Lenormand continued to deal the cards, repeating to herself, in an under tone, "The knave of clubs! again the knave of clubs!" Fouchè continued his reprimands, and informed her that, however lightly she might be disposed to regard the matter, he was about to send her to prison, where she would probably remain for a considerable time.

"How do you know that?" asked the prophetess. "Here is the knave of clubs again, who will set me free sooner than you expect."

"Ah, the knave of clubs will have the credit of it, will he?"

"Yes, the knave of clubs represents your successor in office, — the Duc de Rovigo."

The fall of Napoleon brought fresh credit and honor to Mademoiselle Lenormand. She had foretold the restoration of the Bourbons, and received the rewards of divination. The Emperor Alexander visited and consulted her; and her old patron, Louis XVIII., again availed himself of her science and advice. But it was not the monarchs of Europe alone that gave their support to this singular woman. Prince Talleyrand, with all his incredulity, and with all his knowledge of man, and Madame de Staël, with all her boasted talents and wisdom, both were carried away in the general delusion.

It was during the consulate, when Madame de Staël returned to Paris, after a lengthened absence, that she allowed herself to be persuaded to make a visit to the Rue de Tournon. In the course of conversation, Mademoiselle Lenormand observed, "You are anxious about some event which will probably take place to-morrow, but from which you will receive very little satisfaction." On the succeeding day, Madame de Staël was to have an audience of the first consul, who well knew her pretensions, and was but little disposed to yield to them. Madame, however, flattered herself that the power of her genius, and the charms of her conversation, would overcome the prejudice she was aware he had conceived against her. The lady was received in the midst of a numerous circle, and fully expected to produce a brilliant effect upon Bonaparte, and all who surrounded him. On her being introduced, the consul abruptly asked, "Have you seen *la pie voleuse*, which is so much in fashion?"*

* The Thieving Magpie, a play so called; the same, we presume, as that called in English the Maid and the Magpie.

Surprised at the unexpected question, Madame de Staël hesitated a moment for a reply. "On dit," he added, "we are soon to have *la pie seditieuse* also." The second observation completed the lady's confusion; and the first consul, not wishing to increase it, turned and entered into conversation with some more favored visitor. After this memorable audience, Madame de Staël called to mind the observation of Mademoiselle Lernormand, and from that time had great confidence in her skill, paying her many subsequent visits.

The residence of the prophetess for forty years was at the extremity of a court, (No. 5, Rue de Tournon,) and over the door was inscribed, "Mademoiselle Lenormand, Libraire." The profession of a prophetess not being recognized by the code, she took a "patente de libraire," to receive her visitors and exercise her vocation, without giving offence to the prefect of police or his agents; and, under the title of librarian, her name is inscribed in the royal and national almanac. On ringing at the door of the oracular abode, a servant appeared, and you were introduced into an apartment in which there was nothing extraordinary. So well was the character of Mademoiselle established, that no additional means of imposture were requisite to support it. Some thirty or forty volumes were arranged on shelves against the wall, chiefly consisting of the works of the lady herself — "Les Souvenirs Prophétiques," "La Réponse à Mon. Hoffman, journaliste," "Les Memoires Historiques," and five or six other works chiefly on cabalistic subjects. Mademoiselle soon made her appearance, — a short, fat little woman, with a ruddy face, overshadowed by the abundant curls of a flaxen wig, and surmounted by a semi-oriental turban, the rest of her attire being much in the style of a butter-woman.

"What is your pleasure?" she demanded of her visitor.

"Mademoiselle, I come to consult you."

"Well, sit down; what course of inquiries do you wish to make? I have them at all prices; from six, to ten, twenty, or four hundred francs."

"I wish for information to the amount of a louis-d'or."

"Very well; come to this table; sit down, and give me your left hand." Then followed several queries — "What is your age? What is your favorite flower? To what animal have you the greatest repugnance?" During the course of her questions she continued shuffling the cards; and at length presenting them, desired you to cut them with your left hand. She then dealt them out upon the table one by one, at the same time proclaiming your future fate with a volubility that rendered it very difficult to follow up all she said, and as if she were reading with great rapidity from a printed book. In this torrent of words, sometimes quite unintelligible, occasionally occurred something which particularly struck the inquirer, whose character, tastes, and habits, she sometimes described very accurately, probably in part from phrenological observation. Very often she mentioned remarkable circumstances in his past life with great correctness, at the same time predicting future events, which many of her visitors found to be afterwards realized. Of the failures, probably innumerable, nothing was heard. In justice to the lady, it must however be observed, that her natural shrewdness and observation frequently enabled her to give advice which was of considerable advantage to the inquirer.

Mademoiselle Lenormand, notwithstanding the favors she received from the emperor and Josephine, was a steady and devoted adherent to the elder branch of the Bourbons; and, after the revolution of July, retired very much from her usual business, both in consequence of her

age, and from the diminution of her visitors; passing much of her time at Alençon, where she purchased lands and houses, and built herself a residence which she called "La petite maison de Socrate." Remembering the little honor a prophet receives in his own country, she refused to exercise her vocation in her native town, saying that she came to Alençon to forget that she was a fortune-teller, and that she only calculated horoscopes at Paris.

How far she believed in her own skill cannot be exactly ascertained; but from the fact related in connection with her brother's death, she seems decidedly to have had some faith in the revelations she drew from cards. Another instance is recorded in which she acted from some principle analogous to those from which her conclusions were sometimes drawn. At the time of the first invasion by the allies, Mademoiselle Lenormand had beside her a considerable sum of money, and many articles of value, which she was anxious to intrust to some one in whom she could place confidence. The only person who presented himself at the time was not much known to her, but at the moment there was no one else to whom she chose to address herself. "To what animal," she asked in her usual routine, "have you the most repugnance?" "To rats," was the reply. "It is the sign of a good conscience," she observed. "And to which do you give the preference?" "Oh, I prefer dogs far beyond all others." Mademoiselle, without hesitation, committed the important charge to his care, as one in whom she could place entire confidence.

The prophetess was in person excessively fat and ugly; but her eyes, even in age, preserved their brightness and vivacity, and the good citizens of Alençon were wont to say, "Que ses yeux flamboyants leur faisaient peur." It was never understood that Mademoiselle Lenormand

manifested the slightest inclination to marriage, nor was there ever a question on the subject; but she was well known to have a great aversion to young children. Besides a large funded property, and her houses and lands at Alençon, she possessed a very handsome house in the Rue de la Santé at Paris, a chateau at Poissy, eight leagues from the metropolis, and a large collection of very good pictures, principally representing the acts and deeds of members of the house of Bourbon; also a vast collection of very curious notes respecting the events of which she was a spectatress, or in which she was an actress, all written in her own hand, which, by the by, is a most cabalistic-looking scrawl. She had also autographic and confidential letters from most of the sovereigns of Europe, and was in fact a remarkable proof of the credulity of the nineteenth century, and of an imposture which, for its long and continued success, has had few rivals in any age of the world.

Of the two children of her sister, which she adopted after their mother's death, the daughter died young, of consumption, and the son is now an officer of rank. On the decease of his aunt he inherited all her property.

ANGELICA KAUFFMANN.

ANGELICA KAUFFMANN;

THE ARTIST.

In the fasta of gifted, beautiful, good, wronged, and unhappy women, there are few names that shine with so bright and pure a lustre as that of Angelica Kauffmann. The flower of her life was spent in England; but she is scarcely remembered in it now, even among the members and lovers of the profession which she adorned. Those who wish to know anything definite concerning a lady who was the pet of the English aristocracy, and the cynosure of English painters for some years of the past century, must turn to foreign sources, and hear from foreign lips and pens the praises of poor Angelica. Though undeniably a foreigner, she had as undeniable a right to be mentioned in the records of British painters as those other foreigners domiciliated in England at the same epoch: Listard, Zucchi, Zoffani, Bartolozzi, Cipriani, Roubiliac, Michael Moser, Nollekens, Loutherbourg, Zuccarelli, Vibares, and Fuseli. Of all these worthies of the easel there are copious memoirs and ana extant, yet the published (English) notices of Angelica would not fill half this page. In Sir William Beechey's Memoirs of Sir Joshua Reynolds, there is no mention whatsoever made of her; nor, which is more to be wondered at, is she named in Mr. Allan Cunningham's excellent Life of Sir

Joshua. Yet Angelica painted the president's portrait; and the president himself, it is darkly said, was desirous on his part of possessing not only the portrait of his fair limner, but the original itself. Even the garrulous, tittle-tattling, busybody, Boswell, has nothing to say, in his Life of Johnson, of the catastrophe of Angelica's life; although it was town talk for weeks, and although the sinister finger of public suspicion pointed at no less a man than Johnson's greatest friend, JOSHUA REYNOLDS, as cognizant of, if not accessory to, the conspiracy by which the happiness of Angelica Kauffmann was blasted. In Smith's Nollekens and his Times there is a silly bit of improbable scandal about the fair painter. In Knowles's Life of Fuseli we learn in half-a-dozen meagre lines that that eccentric genius was introduced to Madame Kauffmann on his first coming to England, and that he was very nearly becoming enamored of her; but that this desirable consummation was prevented by Miss Mary Moser, daughter of the keeper of the Royal Academy (appropriately a Swiss), becoming enamoured of him. Stupid, woeful Mr. Pilkington has a brief memoir of Angelica. Wolcot, better known as Peter Pindar, once, and once only, alludes to her. In Chalmer's Biographical Dictionary there is a notice of Angelica about equal, in compass and ability, to that we frequently find of a deceased commissioner of inland revenue in a weekly newspaper. In the vast catalogue of the Museum Library I can only discover one reference to Angelica Kauffmann, personally, that being a stupid epistle to her, written in seventeen hundred and eighty-one by one Mr. G. Keate. I have been thus minute in my English researches, in order to avoid the imputation of having gone abroad, when I might have fared better at home. I might have spared myself some labor too; for my travels in

search of Angelica in foreign parts have been tedious and painful. That which Mr. Artaud, in that great caravanserai of celebrities the Biographie Universelle, has to say about her is of the dryest; and a Herr Bockshammer, a German, from whom I expected great things, merely referred me to another A. Kauffmann, not at all angelical; but connected with a head-splitting treatise on the human mind.

I will try to paint poor Angelica. Calumny, envy, biographers who lie by their silence, cannot deny that she was a creature marvellously endowed. She was a painter, and a musician; she would have made an excellent tragic actress; she embroidered; she danced; she was facund in expression, infinite in variety; she was good, amiable, and virtuous; full of grace, vivacity, and wit. Fancy Venus without her mole; fancy Minerva without her ægis (which was, you may be sure, her ugliness). Fancy Ninon de l'Enclos with the virtue of Madam de Sévigné. Fancy Rachel Esmond with the wit of a Becky Sharp. Fancy a woman as gifted as Sappho, but not a good-for-nothing; as wise as Queen Elizabeth, but no tyrant; as brave as Charlotte, Countess of Derby, but no blood-spiller for revenge; as unhappy as Clarissa Harlowe, but no prude; as virtuous as Pamela, but no calculator. Fancy all this, and fancy too, if you like, that I am in love with the ghost of Angelica Kauffmann, and am talking nonsense.

She was born (to return to reason) in the year seventeen hundred and forty one, at Coire, the capital of the Grisons, a wild, and picturesque district which extends along the right bank of the Rhine to the Lake of Constance. She was baptized Marie-Anne-Angélique-Catherine. Angelica would have been enough for posterity to love her by. But, though rich in names, she was born to

poverty in every other respect. Her father, John Joseph Kauffmann, was an artist, with talents below mediocrity, and his earnings proportionately meagre. He came, as all the Kauffmanns before him did, from Schwarzenburg, in the canton of Voralberg, and appears to have travelled about the surrounding cantons in something nearly approaching the character of an artistic tinker, mending a picture here, copying one there, painting a sign for this gasthof keeper, and decorating a dining-room for that proprietor of a château. These nomadic excursions were ordinarily performed on foot. In one of his visits to Coire, where he was detained for some time, he happened, very naturally, to fall over head and ears in love with a Protestant damsel named Cléofe; nor was it either so very unnatural that Fraulein Cléofe should also fall in love with him. She loved, indeed, so well as to adopt his religion, the Roman Catholic; upon which the church blessed their union, and they were married. Hence Marie-Anne-Angelique-Catherine, and hence this narrative.

If Goodman Kauffmann had really been a tinker, instead of a travelling painter, it is probable that his little daughter would very soon have been initiated into the mysteries of burning her fingers with hot solder, drumming with her infantile fists upon battered pots, and blackening her young face with cinders from the extinguished brazier.

But as it was with little Angelica, her first playthings were paint-brushes, bladders of colors, maul-sticks, and unstrained canvases; and there is no doubt that on many occasions she became quite a little Joseph, and had, if not a coat, at least a pinafore of many colors.

Kauffmann, an honest, simple-minded fellow, knowing nothing but his art, and not much of that, cherished the unselfish hope that in teaching his child, he might soon

teach her to surpass him. The wish — not an unfrequent event in the annals of art — was soon realized. As Raffaelle surpassed Perugino, and Michael Angelo surpassed Ghirlandajo, their masters, so Angelica speedily surpassed her father, and left him far behind. But it did not happen with him as it did with a certain master of the present day, who one day turned his pupil neck and heels out of his studio, crying: "You know more than I do — go to the devil!" The father was delighted at his daughter's marvellous progress. Sensible of the obstacles opposed to a thorough study of drawing and anatomy in the case of females, he strenuously directed Angelica's faculties to the study of color. Very early she became initiated in those wondrous secrets of chiar' oscuro which produce relief, and extenuate, if they do not redeem, the want of severity and correctness. At nine years of age, Angelica was a little prodigy.

In those days Father Kauffmann, urged perhaps by the necessity of opening up a new prospect in Life's diggings, quitted Coire, and established himself at Morbegno in the Valteline. Here he stopped till seventeen hundred and fifty-two, when the artistic diggings being again exhausted, he removed to Como, intending to reside there permanently. The Bishop of Como, Monsignore Nevroni, had heard of the little painter prodigy, then only eleven years of age, and signified his gracious intention of sitting to her for his portrait. The prodigy succeeded to perfection, and she was soon overwhelmed with Mæcenases. The dignified clergy, who, to their honor be it said, have ever been the most generous patrons of art in Italy, were the first to offer Angelica commissions. She painted the Archbishop of Milan, Cardinal Pozzobonelli, Count Firmiani, Rinaldo d'Este, Duke of Modena, and the Duchess of Massa-Carrara, and "many more," as the bard

of the coronation sings. John Joseph Kauffmann's little daughter was welcome in palazzo, convent, and villa.

I am glad, seeing that Angelica was a prodigy, that J. J. Kauffmann did not in any way resemble that most odious character, the ordinary prodigy's father. There was the little prodigy with flaxen curls, in a black velvet tunic, with thunder-and-lightning buttons, who used to play on the harp so divinely, and used to be lifted in at carriage windows for countesses to kiss; and had at home a horrible, snuffy Italian monster of a father, who ate up the poor child's earnings — who drank absinthe till he was mad, and pulled his miserable child's flaxen hair till he was tired — who was insufferably lazy, unimaginably proud, mean, vain, and dirty, — a profligate and a cheat, — who was fit for no place but the galleys, from which, I believe, he came, and to which, I devoutly hope, he returned. Miserable little dancing, singing, guitar-playing, painting, pianoforte-thumping, horse-riding, poem-reciting prodigies have I known; unfortunate little objects with heads much too large, with weary eyes, with dark bistre circles round them; with rickety limbs, with a timid cowering aspect. I never knew but one prodigy's father who was good for anything, and he was a prodigy himself — an acrobat — and threw his son about as though he loved him. The rest, — not only fathers, but mothers, brothers, and uncles, — were all bad.

But J. J. Kauffmann loved his daughter dearly; and, though she was a prodigy, was kind to her; he delighted in sounding her praises; he petted her; he loved to vary her gentle name of Angelica into all the charming diminutives of which it was susceptible; he called her his Angela, his Angelina, his Angelinetta. He was a widower now, and his strange old turn for vagabondizing came over him with redoubled force. The father and daughter,

— strange pair — so ill-assorted in age, so well in love,— went trooping about the Grisons, literally picking up bread with the tips of their pencils. Once Angelica was entrusted, alone, to paint, in fresco, an altar-piece for a village church; and a pleasant sight it must have been to watch the fragile little girl perched on the summit of a lofty scaffolding, gracefully, piously painting angels and lambs, and doves, and winged heads; while, on the pavement beneath, honest J. J. Kauffmann was expatiating on his daughter's excellencies to the pleased curate and the gaping villagers; or, more likely still, was himself watching the progress of those skilful, nimble little fingers up above, — his arms folded, his head thrown back, tears in his eyes, and pride and joy in his heart.

The poor fellow knew he could never hope to leave his daughter a considerable inheritance. Money he had none to give her. He gave her instead, and nearly starved himself to give her, the most brilliant education that could be procured. He held out the apple of science, and his pretty daughter was only too ready to bite at it with all her white teeth. Besides her rare aptitude for painting, she was passionately fond of, and had a surprising talent for, music. Her voice was pure, sweet, and of great compass; her execution, full of soul. Valiantly she essayed and conquered the most difficult of the grand old Italian pieces. These she sang, accompanying herself on the clavecin; and often would she sing, from memory, some dear and simple Tyrolean ballad to amuse her father, melancholy in his widowhood.

But painting and music, and the soul of a poet, and the form of a queen, how did these agree with poor father Kauffmann's domestic arrangements? Alas! the roof was humble, the bed was hard, the sheets were coarse, the bread was dark and sour when won. Then, while the

little girl lay on the rugged pallet, or mended her scanty wardrobe, there would come up — half unbidden, half ardently desired — resplendent day-dreams, gorgeous visions of Apelles, the friend of kings; of Titian in his palace; of Rubens an ambassador, with fifty gentlemen riding in his train; of Anthony Vandyke, knighted by royalty, and respected by learning, and courted by beauty; of Raffaelle the divine, all but invested with the purple pallium of the sacred college; of Velasquez with his golden key; Aposentador, mayor to King Philip, master of the revels at the Isle of Pheasants, as handsome, rich, and proud as any of the thousand nobles there. Who could help such dreams? The prizes in Art's lottery are few, but what can equal them in splendor and glory that dies not easily?

At sixteen years of age, Angelica was a brunette, rather pale than otherwise. She had blue eyes, long black hair, which fell in tresses over her polished shoulders, and which she could never be prevailed upon to powder, long beautiful hands, and coral lips. At twenty, Angelica was at Milan, where her voice and beauty were nearly the cause of her career as an artist being brought to an end. She was passionately solicited to appear on the lyric stage. Managers made her tempting offers; nobles sent her flattering notes; ladies approved; bishops and archbishops even gave a half assent; nay, J. J. Kauffmann himself could not disguise his eagerness for the syren voice of his Angelinetta to be heard at the Scala. But Angelica herself was true to her art. She knew how jealous a mistress art is; with a sigh, but bravely and resolutely, she bade farewell to music, and resumed her artistic studies with renewed energy.

After having visited Parma and Florence, she arrived in Rome, in seventeen hundred and sixty-three. Next

year she visited Naples, and in the next year, Venice; painting everywhere, and received everywhere with brilliant and flattering homage. Six years of travel among the masterpieces of Italian art, and constant practice and application, had ripened her talent, had enlarged her experience, had given a firmer grasp both to her mind and her hand. Her reputation spread much in Germany, most in Italy; though the Italians were much better able to appreciate her talent than to reward it. But, in the eighteenth century, the two favorite amusements prevalent among the aristocracy of the island of Britain were the grand tour and patronage. No lord or baronet's education was completed till (accompanied by a reverend bear-leader) he had passed the Alps and studied each several continental vice on its own peculiar soil. But when he reached Rome, he had done with vice, and went in for virtù. He fell into the hands of the antiquaries, virtuosi, and curiosity dealers of Rome with about the same result to his pocket, as if he had fallen into the hands of the brigands of Terracina.

Some demon whispered, Visto, have a taste.

But the demon of virtù was not satisfied with the possession of taste by Visto. He insisted that he should also have a painter, a sculptor, a medallist, or an enamellist; and scarcely a lord or baronet arrived in England from the grand tour without bringing with him French cooks, French dancers, poodles, broken statues, chaplains, led captains, Dresden china, Buhl cabinets, Viennese clocks, and Florentine jewelry — some Italian artist, with a long name ending in *elli*, who was to be patronized by my lord, to paint the portraits of my lord's connections, to chisel out a colossal group for the vestibule of my lord's country-

house, or to execute colossal monuments to departed British valor for Westminster Abbey by my lord's recommendation. Sometimes the patronized *elli* turned out well; was really clever; made money, and became eventually an English R. A.; but much more frequently he was Signor Donkeyelli, atrociously incapable, conceited and worthless. He quarrelled with his patron, my lord, was cast off, and subsided into some wretched court near St. Martin's Lane, which he pervaded with stubbly jaws, a ragged duffel coat, and a shabby hat cocked nine-bauble square. He haunted French cook-shops, and painted clock-faces, tavern-signs, anything. He ended miserably, sometimes in the workhouse, sometimes at Tyburn, for stabbing a fellow-countryman in a night-cellar.

My poor Angelica did not escape the wide-spread snare of the age — patronage; but she fell, in the first instance, into good hands. Some rich English families residing at Venice made her very handsome offers to come to England. She hesitated; but, while making up her mind, thought there could be no harm in undertaking the study of the English language. In this she was very successful. Meanwhile, Father Kauffmann was recalled to Germany by some urgent family affairs. In this conjuncture, an English lady, but the widow of a Dutch admiral, Lady Mary Veertvoort, offered to become her chaperon to England. The invitation was gratefully accepted, and was promptly put in execution.

Angelica Kauffman arrived in London on the twenty-second of June, seventeen hundred and sixty-six. She took up her residence with lady Mary Veertvoort, in Charles Street, Berkeley Square. The good old lady treated her like her own daughter, petted her, made much of her, and initiated her into all the little secrets of English comfort. Before she had been long in this country,

she was introduced by the Marquis of Exeter to the man who then occupied, without rivalry and without dissent, the throne of English art. Fortunate in his profession, easy in circumstances, liberal in his mode of living, cultivated in mind, fascinating in manners, the friendship of Joshua Reynolds was a thing of general desideration. To all it was pleasant — to many it was valuable.

Lord Exeter's introduction was speedily productive of a cordial intimacy between Angelica and Reynolds. He painted Angelica's portrait: she painted his. On the establishment of the Royal Academy, she was enrolled among its members, — a rare honor for a lady. But, the friendship of Sir Joshua soon ripened into a warmer feeling. He became vehemently in love with her. There is no evidence, or indeed reason, to suppose that Reynold's intentions towards Angelica Kauffmann were anything but honorable. There was no striking disparity between their ages. The fame of Angelica bid fair in time to equal his own, and bring with it a commensurate fortune; yet, for some inexplicable reason, — probably through an aversion or a caprice as inexplicable, — Angelica discouraged his advances. To avoid his importunities, she even fled from the protection of Lady Mary Veertvoort, and established herself in a house in Golden Square, where she was soon afterwards joined by her father.

At the commencement of the year seventeen sixty-seven, Angelica Kauffmann shared — with honors of extra magnitude, toupees of superabundant floweriness, shoe-heels of vividest scarlet, and china monsters of superlative ugliness — the mighty privilege of being the fashion. Madame de Pompadour was the fashion in France just then, so was Buhl furniture, Boucher's pictures, and the Baron de Holbach's atheism; so, in England were "drums," ridottos, Junius's Letters, and burn-

ings of Lord Bute's jack-boots in effigy. The beauteous Duchess of Devonshire — she who had even refused Reynolds the favor of transferring her lineaments to canvas — commissioned the fair Tyrolean to execute her portrait, together with that of Lady Duncannon. Soon came a presentation at St. James's; next a commission from George the Third for his portrait, and that of the young Prince of Wales. After this, Angelica became doubly, trebly, fashionable. She painted at this time a picture of Venus attired by the Graces, — a dangerous subject. Some of the critics grumbled of course, and muttered that Cupid wouldn't have known his own mother in the picture; but decorous royalty applauded, and aristocracy patronized, and the critics were dumb.

So all went merry as a marriage bell with J. J. Kauffmann's daughter. A magnificent portrait of the Duchess of Brunswick, put the seal to the patent of her reputation. No fashionable assembly was complete without her presence. In the world of fashion, the world of art, the world of literature, she was sought after, courted, idolized. One young nobleman, it is stated, fell into a state of melancholy madness because she refused to paint his portrait. Officers in the Guards fought for a ribbon that had dropped from her corsage at a birthnight ball. The reigning toasts condescended to be jealous of her, and hinted that the beauty of "these foreign women" was often fictitious, and never lasting. Dowagers more accustomed to the use of paint than even she was, hoped that she was "quite correct," and shook their powdered old heads, and croaked about Papists and female emissaries of the Pretender. Scandal, of course, was on the alert. Sir Benjamin Backbite called on Lady Sneerwell in his sedan chair. Mrs. Candour was closeted with Mrs. Marplot; and old Doctor Basilio, the Spanish music-master of Lei-

cester Fields, talked toothless scandal with his patron, Don Bartolo of St. Mary-Axe. The worst stories that scandalmongers could invent were but two in number, and are harmless enough to be told here. One was, that Angelica was in the habit of attending, dressed in boy's clothes, the Royal Academy Life School; the second story — dreadful accusation! — was that Angelica was a flirt, an arrant coquette; and that one evening at Rome, being at the opera with two English artists, one of whom was Mr. Dance (afterwards Sir Nathaniel Dance Holland, the painter of Garrick in Richard the Third), she had allowed both gentlemen gently to encircle her waist with their arms — at the same time; nay, more, that folding her own white waxen arms on the ledge of the opera box, and finding naturally a palpitating artist's hand on either side, she had positively given each hand a squeeze, also at the same time; thereby leading each artist to believe that he was the favored suitor. I don't believe Angelica ever did anything of the kind.

Scandal, jealousy, reigning toasts, and withered dowagers notwithstanding, Angelica continued the fashion. Still the carriages blocked up Golden Square; still she was courted by the noble and wealthy; still ardent young Oxford bachelors and buckish students of the Temple wrote epistles in heroic verse to her; still she was the talk of the coffee-houses and studios; still from time to time the favored few who gained admission to Lady Mary Veertvoort's evening concerts were charmed by Angelica's songs — by the grand Italian pieces, and the simple, plaintive Tyrolean airs of old.

In seventeen sixty-eight there appeared in the most fashionable circles of London a man, young, handsome, distinguished, accomplished in manners, brilliant in conversation, the bearer of a noble name, and the possessor

of a princely fortune. He dressed splendidly, played freely, lost good humoredly, took to racing, cock-fighting, masquerade-giving, and other fashionable amusements of the time, with much kindliness and spirit. He speedily became the fashion himself, but he did not oust Angelica from her throne; he reigned with her a twin-planet. This was the Count Frederic de Horn, the representative of a noble Swedish family, who had been for some time expected in England. Whether poor, poor little Angelica really loved him; whether she was dazzled by his embroidery, his diamond star, his glittering buckles, his green ribbon, his title, his handsome face and specious tongue, will never be known; but she became speedily his bride. For my part I think she was seized by one of those short madnesses of frivolity to which all beautiful women are subject. You know not why, they know not why themselves, but they melt the pearl of their happiness in vinegar as the Egyptian queen did: she in the wantonness of wealth, they in the wasteful extravagance of youth, the consciousness of beauty, the impatience of control, and the momentary hatred of wise counsel.

Angelica Kauffmann was married in January, seventeen hundred and sixty-eight, with great state and splendor, to the man of her choice. Half London witnessed their union: rich were the presents showered upon the bride, multifarious the good wishes for the health and prosperity of the young couple. And all went merry as a marriage bell, — till the bell rang out, first in vague rumors, then in more accredited reports, at last as an incontrovertible, miserable truth, that another Count de Horn had arrived in England to expose and punish an impostor and swindler who had robbed him of his property and his name, — till it was discovered that Angelica

Kauffmann had married the man so sought — a low-born cutpurse, the footman of the Count!

Poor Angelica, indeed! This bell tolled the knell of her happiness on earth. The fraudulent marriage was annulled as far as possible, by a deed of separation dated the tenth of February, seventeen hundred and sixty-eight; a small annuity was secured to the wretched impostor, on condition that he should quit England and not return. He took his money and went abroad. Eventually he died in obscurity.

Numberless conjectures have been made as to whether this unfortunate marriage was merely a genteel swindling speculation on the part of the Count de Horn's lackey, or whether it was the result of a deep-laid conspiracy against the happiness and honor of Angelica. A French novelist, who has written a romance on the events of her life, invents a very dexterous, though very improbable fable of a certain Lord Baronet, member of the chamber of Commons, whose hand had been refused by Angelica, and who in mean and paltry revenge, discovered, tutored, fitted out, and launched into society, the rascally fellow who had been recently discharged from the service of the Count de Horn, and whose name he impudently assumed. Another novelist makes out the false count to have been a young man, simple, credulous, and timid — lowly-born, it is true, but still sincerely enamoured of Angelica (like the Claude Melnotte of Pauline in the Lady of Lyons). He is even led to believe that he is the real Prince of Como — we beg pardon — Count de Horn, — imagines that a mysterious veil envelops the circumstances of his birth, but, when the truth is discovered, and he finds that he has been made the tool of designing villains, he testifies the utmost remorse, and is desirous of making every reparation in his power. A third author, M. Dessalles

Regis, not only avers the premeditated guilt of the false count, but alludes to a dark rumor that the Beauséant of the drama, the villain who had dressed up this lay-figure in velvet and gold lace to tempt Angelica to destruction, was no other than her rejected lover, Sir Joshua Reynolds. For my part, I incline to the first hypothesis. I believe the footman to have been a scoundrel.

A long period of entire mental and bodily prostration followed the ill-starred marriage. J. J. Kauffmann, good fellow, comforted his daughter as well as he was able; but his panacea for her grief, both of mind and body, was Italy. He was weary of England, fashions, false counts; — there was no danger of spurious nobility abroad, for could not any one with a hundred a year of his own be a count if he liked? Still Angelica remained several years more in the country; still painting, still patronized, but living almost entirely in retirement. When the death of her husband, the footman, placed her hand at liberty, she bestowed it on an old and faithful friend, Antonia Zucchi, a painter of architecture; and, five days afterwards, the husband, wife, and father embarked for Venice. Zucchi was a tender husband; but he was a wayward, chimerical, visionary man, and wasted the greatest part of his wife's fortune in idle speculations. He died in 1795, leaving her little or nothing. The remainder of poor Angelica's life was passed, if not in poverty, at least in circumstances straitened to one who, after the first hardships of her wandering youth, had lived in splendor and freedom, and the companionship of the great. But she lived meekly, was a good woman, and went on painting to the last.

Angelica Kauffmann died a lingering death at Rome, on the fifth of November, 1805. On the seventh she was buried in the church of St. Andrea delle Frate; the

academicians of St. Luke followed the bier, and the entire ceremony was under the direction of Canova. As at the funeral of Rafaelle Sanzio, the two last pictures she had painted were carried in the procession; on the coffin there was a model of her right hand in plaster, the fingers crisped, as though it held a pencil.

This was the last on earth of Angelica Kauffmann. Young, beautiful, amiable, gifted by nature with the rarest predilections, consecrated to the most charming of human occupations, run after, caressed, celebrated among the most eminent of her contemporaries, she would appear to have possessed everything that is most desirable in this life. One little thing she wanted to fill up the measure of her existence, and that was happiness. This is man's life. There is no block of marble so white but you shall find a blue vein in it, and the snow-flake from heaven shall not rest a second on the earth without becoming tinged with its impurities.

MARY BAKER.

MARY BAKER;

THE "PRINCESS OF JAVASU."

THE annals of successful imposition cannot furnish a more curious instance of fraud, ingeniously carried on by an untutored but artful girl, than that exhibited by the pretended "Princess of Javasu," who came before the English public in 1817. That an illiterate cobbler's daughter, born and bred in an obscure village of Devonshire, with features of the most ordinary kind, and manners totally uncultivated, should, by the aid of natural quickness of wit alone, and an overweening vanity, have so conducted herself as to induce hundreds to believe that she was no less a personage than an unfortunate, unprotected, and wandering princess from a distant Eastern Island, cast upon the shores of Britain by cruel and relentless pirates, — that she should have sustained this character with a countenance never changed by the most abject flattery, or the most abusive invective, — constantly surrounded by persons of superior talent and education, as well as by those in her own rank of life, who were always on the watch to mark any inconsistency, or to seize upon any occurrence that could lead to detection, — yet on no occasion losing sight of the part she was acting, or ever betraying herself, — furnishes an instance of art and duplicity far exceeding anything of the kind in the annals of modern imposture.

It was on the evening of Thursday, the third of April, 1817, that the overseer of the poor of the parish of Almondsbury, in the county of Gloucester, called at Knole Park, the residence of Samuel Worrall, Esq., to inform the inmates that a strange visitor had appeared in the village, whom no one could comprehend. She was dressed in a semi-Asiatic fashion, appeared to be about twenty-five years of age, could not speak or understand English, and, in fact, puzzled all who had seen her. In the village public-house she had been particularly interested in a print of the Anana, and indicated by signs that it was the fruit of her own country. She seemed to be unaccustomed to sleeping in a bed; and, upon being confronted with the clergyman, who had brought some geographical books with him, appeared to know something of China. She was apparently very devout, saying a prayer before each cup of tea, and, upon one occasion, perceiving some cross-buns on the table, she took one, and, after looking earnestly at it, cut off the cross and placed it in her bosom. She seemed to be delighted at seeing anything resembling Chinese manufactures in the fittings of the house; and upon her name being asked by signs, she pointed to herself, saying, "Caraboo, Caraboo!"

After some days, she was removed to the hospital, at Bristol, and while there was visited by a gentleman who had travelled much in the East, and from what he could gather he declared, "I think her *name* is not Caraboo, but rather that that is her *country*. I think that she comes from the Bay of Karabouh, on the eastern coast of the Caspian Sea, in Independent Tartary." A Portuguese, from the Malay country, who happened to be in Bristol, was introduced to her, and he asserted that he could, to some extent, interpret her language. He pronounced her to be a person of rank, who had been decoyed

from an island in the East Indies, brought to England, and there abandoned, and that her language was a mixed dialect, used on the coast of Sumatra, and in other islands in the East. Mrs. Worrall, being entirely satisfied of the truth of these representations, received the stranger into her own house, and soon afterwards learned, from her words and gestures during an interview with an East-Indian traveller, that her name was Caraboo, — that she was the daughter of a person of rank, of Chinese origin, — that while walking in her garden she was seized and carried on board a pirate vessel, — that her father was killed in attempting to rescue her, — and that when off the coast of England she escaped from her captors by jumping overboard and swimming ashore. She described the dress worn by her sex in her native country, and, being furnished with the material, cut and made one for herself.

To narrate in detail the many shrewd tricks by which she managed to keep up the deception, would occupy too much time and space. She made a chart of her supposed journey, which she ultimately acknowledged to be entirely the result of the leading questions propounded to her. She portrayed the method of writing in her own country, by a sort of reed, upon the bark or leaf of a tree, with Indian ink. Some of the characters made use of by her were perfectly formed and conjoined Arabic characters: it scarcely need be said, that they were copied by her from those which she had seen written by some Orientalist, who wished to test her knowledge of the language. Others were purely of her own invention; and it was this admixture of the true and false which perplexed all inquirers, and induced many of them to believe her to be a native of some of the less known tribes of the East. During the whole term of her residence at Mrs. Worrall's,

no inconsistency was apparent between her story and her actions; every attempt at detection was fruitless; her whole conduct tended to increase rather than diminish confidence in the truth of her representations. Among other occurrences tending to show the dexterous ingenuity with which she seized upon and availed herself of whatever she saw or heard, is the following: —

A gentleman observed, in her presence, that it was customary in the East to stain the points of daggers with vegetable poison; the next time a dagger was placed in her hands, she went to a flower-stand, and rubbing a couple of leaves between her fingers, applied the juice to the point, and then touching her arm, pretended to swoon. She, in truth, conducted herself so correctly, and her manners were so fascinating, that she soon became a favorite with all, and thoroughly domesticated at Knole.

After three weeks' residence there, she was missing one morning; she had gone to Bristol, to take passage in a vessel to America, but the ship had sailed. She thereupon went to the lodgings which she had temporarily occupied in that city, packed up her trunk and sent it to her father by an Exeter wagon, and returned to Knole, ill and disappointed, but with a story prepared for the occasion, and succeeded in again eluding suspicion and exciting sympathy.

Had this *Princess of Javasu* escaped to America, or elsewhere, leaving her singular imposture undiscovered, a mystery might have forever hung over the entire matter; but she was destined to carry her imposition to still greater length before it was detected. Having been disappointed of her voyage, she tarried for a little time longer under the roof of her protectress at Knole; but becoming tired of confinement to one spot, or, perhaps, fearing discovery from the frequent visits she paid with

her protectress to Bristol, where she might be so unfortunate as to meet her old landlady of Lewin's-mead, — or that she might be sent to London for examination at the East India House, as Mrs. Worrall had determined, — she again took flight, on Saturday, the sixth of June, and made her way towards the ancient and fashionable city of Bath. But, with that strict regard to individual rights which, in spite of her imposture, had always characterized her, she did not appropriate to herself the smallest trifle of ribbon or dress which did not belong to her. The place of her elopement was communicated on the next day to her benefactress, who posted off to Bath with a determination to reclaim her, where a scene ludicrous in the extreme met her eyes. She found the pretended *princess* at the very pinnacle of her glory and ambition, in the drawing-room of a lady of *haut ton*. The room was crowded with fashionable visitants, all eager to be introduced to the interesting princess. There was one fair female kneeling before her, another taking her by the hand, another begging a kiss, another offering *her Royal Highness* a bowl of cream, and still others charmed and amazed at the cobbler's daughter's "natural grandeur and sublimity." To such extent did the Bath ladies allow their imaginations to run away with their judgments, and become the willing dupes of an artful girl. Caraboo afterwards declared that this was the most trying scene through which she had ever passed; and that on this occasion she found it more difficult to refrain from laughing and to avoid detection than at any other time during the whole career of her imposture.

But it was not the ladies alone who were deceived by her, and who, with great kindness of heart, a scarcely perceptible amount of suspicion, and a love for the romantic and the marvellous, as well as a desire for some

new *lion* to interrupt the monotony of their lives, gave such ready credence to her pretensions. Dr. Wilkinson, an eminent practitioner of that city, was as completely fascinated by her, as were the gentlemen from China already alluded to, and the many other lovers of the marvellous, who had been already duped so successfully at Knole. He carried his belief so far as to publish in the *Bath Chronicle* a detailed description of her adventures and person, which was eventually the means of leading to a detection of the imposture. He gravely observes, in one of these letters — "Such is the general effect on all who behold her, that, if before suspected as an impostor, the sight of her *removes all doubt*." But at the present time, when all doubt is really removed, it is impossible to suppress a smile when we read the doctor's grave statement that — "all the assistance to be derived from a polyglot Bible, Fry's Pantographia, or Dr. Hager's Elementary Characters of the Chinese, do not enable us to ascertain either the nature of her language or the country to which she belongs. One or two characters bear some resemblance to the Chinese, particularly the Chinese *cho*, a reed. There are more characters which have some similitude to the Greek, particularly the ι, π and ε. Different publications have been shown to her, in Greek, Malay, Chinese, Sanscrit, Arabic, and Persic, but with all she appears to be entirely unacquainted." He then says that her letter has been shown "to every person in Bristol and Bath, versed in oriental literature, but without success. A copy was sent to the India House, and submitted by the chairman of that company to the examination of Mr. Raffles, one of the best oriental scholars; yet he could not decipher it." The Oxford scholars, he says, "denied its being the character of any language;" but others consider it "imperfect Javanese," or "the Malay

of Sumatra!" He inclines to believe it Circassian, and feels confident that she comes from the East, because she declared that she had been ill on her journey, and had had her hair cut off, and an operation performed on the back of her head. "I examined the part; it had been scarified, but not according to the English mode of cupping, or to any European manner with which I am acquainted; the incisions are extremely regular, and apparently effected with the caustic, a mode of cupping adopted in the East!!" Caraboo lacked only such grave authority to make her farce complete!

The doctor was a true friend, although a too enthusiastic one for an impostor. He posted off to London to appeal to the East India directors, and to introduce Caraboo, who was to follow him the day after his departure, to their notice. In a letter which he caused to be printed the day before in the *Bath Herald*, he declares that no one doubted her except — "those whose souls feel not the spirit of benevolence, and wish to convert into ridicule that amiable disposition in others." At the very moment when the doctor's letter was being printed at Bath, Caraboo was making a full confession of her imposture at Bristol! What a rebuke for a philosopher!

On this eventful day, Caraboo left Bath with her protectress, Mrs. Worrall, to return to the scene of her first attempt at imposition; and so well did she practise on the credulity and good nature of this lady, that she became even more interested in her behalf and more confirmed than ever in her belief. But the re-publication in the *Bristol Journal* of Dr. Wilkinson's first letter led to the detection of the imposture. Caraboo's landlady at Lewin's-mead — Mrs. Neale — had read it with no small degree of surprise and amusement, and in an instant

recognized the *Princess of Javasu* as her late lodger, *Mary Baker*. She communicated her suspicion on the following morning to a gentleman, a friend of Mrs. Worrall, who immediately apprised her of the fact; and he had scarcely left the parlor at Knole, when a youth arrived from Westbury, who had met with the girl in her first expedition there, and who well remembered that when she was in his company, spirits and water were not quite so repugnant to her taste as they had been at Knole. Mrs. Worrall did not communicate her information to Caraboo, but resolved on the next day to test its truth. Accordingly, in the morning, she carried her to Bristol, and took her to the house of the gentleman before referred to. Mrs. Neale and her daughters were there; and after Mrs. Worrall had conversed with them, she returned to Caraboo, and informed her of the conclusive proofs she now possessed of her being an impostor. Caraboo, however, still tried to interest and deceive her, by exclaiming, in her usual gibberish — "Caraboo's Toddy, Moddy (*father* and *mother*) Irish!" But finding the attempt to be less successful than usual, and that Mrs. Worrall was about to order Mrs Neale up stairs, and confront her with her old landlady, she realized that the bubble had at last burst, and at once acknowledged the cheat, begging that Mrs. W. would not cast her off, or suffer her father to be sent for. This was promised upon certain conditions, one of which was that she would instantly give a faithful detail of her former course of life, disclose her real name, her parentage and history. Mrs. Neale being dismissed, the girl immediately commenced a narrative to Mr. Mortimer, the gentleman in whose house the *éclaircissement* took place, in which, to account for her knowledge of Eastern customs, she attempted to show that she

had resided for four months at Bombay, and also at the Isle of France, as nurse in a European family. Mr. Mortimer, having visited Bombay, soon detected her, and she refused to communicate any further particulars; but to another gentleman, soon afterwards, she made a full and frank confession.

She acknowledged that her real name was Mary Baker, (that of her parents Wilcox); that she was born at Witheridge in 1791, and had received no education, owing to her irregular disposition. At eight years of age she was employed in spinning wool; in the summer months she often drove the farmers' horses, weeded the corn, and assisted in all kinds of labor. From her earliest youth she had always been ambitious to excel her companions in all their games and sports, such as cricket, swimming etc. At the age of sixteen she obtained a situation in a farmhouse to look after the children; but while there often carried a sack of corn or apples on her back, and endeavored to emulate the laboring men. After two years she left this place because she received as wages but tenpence a week, and her employers refused to pay her the shilling a week which she required. She returned to her father's house, but being badly received she left for Exeter, where she obtained a situation which she soon abandoned, however, and continued roaming from place to place until misery and poverty induced her to attempt suicide. Receiving unexpected charity, she continued her melancholy wandering, until she reached London, where she was ill in St. Giles' Hospital for a long time. She went from thence to service in a lady's family, who gave her instruction and kept her for three years, at the expiration of which time she procured admission to the Magdalen Hospital, fancying it to be a place of refuge for

females of every description, but was expelled upon the discovery being made that she had no real claim on its funds. She exchanged her dress at a pawn-broker's for that of a man, as she feared travelling alone as a woman, and journeyed to Exeter, where she again exchanged, and went to her father's. Having contracted a dislike to the country, she returned to London, where she became acquainted with "a gentlemanly-looking man," whom, after an acquaintance of two months, she married; but after a few months he left her suddenly for Calais, promising to write and send for her; a promise which he never performed. His name was Bakerstendht, or Beckerstein, which was contracted into Baker; and there is little doubt that it was from him she obtained a knowledge of the Eastern words and idioms, as well as of the Asiatic customs, which so effectually enabled her to carry out her imposition, as he had travelled among the Malays. After enduring some more unhappy reverses, and giving birth to a child, which died in the Foundling Hospital, she again visited Exeter, which, however, she soon left for Plymouth, falling in with gipsies on the road, with whom she lived some few days. After leaving them, she assumed the manners and partial garb of a foreigner, being taken for French or Spanish by the country people, and going from place to place, living on occasional contributions. After many adventures in her assumed garb, she reached the house of Mrs. Worrall, the principal scene of the imposture already narrated.

The parents of Caraboo were found, and the substance of her narrative discovered to be correct; they spoke of her *learning* having much increased after her marriage, and of her talking some language which they could not understand. Letters in their possession written by

her, before and after her journey to London and her marriage there, furnish a conclusive evidence of wonderful improvement in educational training.

The principal occurrences of "the princess's" life, as she narrated them, having been thus proved to be true Mrs. Worrall determined to send her out to America, whither she still expressed a strong wish to go. In the mean time the termination of her imposture had greatly excited public curiosity, and she was visited by persons of all descriptions: noblemen, gentlemen, natives and foreigners, linguists, painters, physiognomists, craniologists, all swelled the throng at her *levées*, while she, on her part, appeared highly gratified by the number of dupes she had made. It is but justice, however, to add that she always expressed the greatest gratitude to Mrs. Worrall.

After the discovery, she more than once expressed a wish that her adventures might be dramatized, for she declared that nothing would give her greater pleasure than to perform the part of Caraboo. She was highly delighted with her success as an impostor, and in no instance manifested any regret for the imposition. Her vanity was much gratified by the attention she received, and her hopes of a successful visit to America were evidently based on some wild and desperate scheme, as she predicted that she should return to England and keep her carriage and four. On her first arrival in America, she exhibited herself in the costume she had adopted to aid her deceptions, and attracted much attention. But the *éclat* which attended her advent soon subsided, and her restless disposition would not long permit her to remain quiet. In the year 1824 she returned from America, and taking apartments in New Bond-street, made a public exhibition of herself. But seven years had elapsed since

the period of her imposition, and public interest in her had ceased. The price of admittance was fixed at one shilling, but the number of her visitors was so small that the exhibition soon closed, and the *Princess of Javasu* sunk into the obscurity from which she originally emerged.

POPE JOAN.

POPE JOAN;

THE WOMAN PONTIFF.

"I sing of that distinguished maiden who,
By studies grave in cœnobitic cell,
Could for a while her nature so subdue,
And drank so deep at learning's sacred well,—
That versed in all philosophy she grew,
And grasp'd at last the keys of heaven and hell!
I mean to celebrate the manly Joan,
Who from a cowl attained the papal throne!"

CHANCE placed in the hands of the writer of this article the manuscript translation of a poetical biography of Pope Joan by an Italian author, Casti, who, with considerable pains, had developed her history by analysing the numerous writers who have entered the lists upon this long contested and still unsettled question.

The poem opens with the extract prefixed to this article, and continues to the disastrous termination of Joan's singular career, in a diffuse but not uninteresting flow of verse, possessing, at any rate, the merit of displaying the conflicting opinions on a question, which at one period enlisted the champions of the Reformed Church and the Roman Catholic fathers in a fierce and relentless controversy. Curiosity has led us to consult a long list of authors whose labors supplied the material from which the

poem is constructed; and the following notice of the heroine is the result.

Examples have not been wanting in all ages, of females, weary of the restraints to which their sex was subjected, adopting male attire, and not only mixing in the active affairs of life, but attaining great eminence by the cultivation of remarkable talents. Eugenie, the celebrated daughter of Philip, governor of Alexandria under the Emperor Gallien, disguised herself as a monk, and by her acquirements and close application, became abbot of the monastery she had entered. This history, the full particulars of which, for prudential reasons, we cannot detail, is narrated in a poem by Alcimus Avitus, Archbishop of Vienna in the sixth century. Theodore of Alexandria, a female who lived under the Emperor Leo the First, having in her youth committed a grave fault, took the dress of a man, and became renowned for her piety and learning. In the twelfth century, Hildegonde, excited probably by the example of Joan, assumed the attire of a man, took the name of Joseph, and passed her life in the odor of sanctity in a monastery of Cistertian monks. To mention one instance only in latter times, Joan's namesake, the Maid of Orleans, who evinced a decided predilection for the manly garb. On her trial it was alleged that she had dressed herself in clothes which had been placed within her reach in the prison cell, and she had not been able to resist the temptation of seeing herself once more in a masculine character.

Nearly a thousand years have elapsed since the controversy respecting the existence of a Pope Joan, who, it is supposed, succeeded Leo the Fourth, in the ninth century of the Christian era, commenced. The several disputants, according to their convictions or preconceptions, have endeavored to support their opinions with historical

and chronological arguments, by the testimony of the most respectable writers, or by chronicles and manuscripts carefully preserved in celebrated archives and libraries. The singularity of the event, which, it must be confessed, has somewhat the appearance of being fabulous, from the supposed injury which a belief in it might inflict upon the Apostolic See, has caused this point of ecclesiastical history to be contested, or regarded as a calumny introduced by the Reformers to vilify the dignity of the pontifical chair. But notwithstanding it may have appeared alternately to the world as a fable, or as an event of actual occurrence, during several ages opinions have inclined to the latter decision, and it is somewhat curious that the Council of Constance, whilst severely criticising and condemning the works of the Reformer, Huss, exempted from blame those passages relating to Pope Joan, thus tacitly acknowledging their veracity.

Without pretending to decide the question, we proceed to offer some brief particulars of the life of this celebrated myth or personage, which have been transmitted from remote periods by successive authors, many of whom were Roman Catholics, attached to the papal hierarchy, but whose convictions of the existence of a female pope would not admit of silence on this point. Indeed some writers in this category have even labored to prove that the election of Joan to the papacy rather redounded to the honor of the See of Rome than otherwise, as it was the remarkable genius of the heroine which alone occasioned her elevation; thus proving the discernment of the consistorial dignitaries by whom she was elected.

How far such opinions coincide with the doctrine of apostolical succession and the infallibility of the Roman Pontiffs might well be questioned, although it is sufficiently notorious, that in the long list of popes who entitled

themselves successors to St. Peter, and claimed to be the keepers of the keys of heaven and hell, are found many whose intrigues, adventures, and sensuality greatly surpass the venality of Joan, in whose time the title of lover to some Roman lady was the species of merit which led to the pontificate. To cite a few instances only. Liberius was an Arian, Anastasius Nestor, Honorius Monothelite, and John the Twenty-third, were Atheists. Cardinal Baronius styles Boniface the Sixth, and Stephen the Seventh, "rascals and execrable monsters;" and the same writer mentions circumstances connected with other popes so frightful and revolting, that he expresses the fear that they would be considered fabulous. Genebrand, Archbishop of Aix, in his "Chronicle," written in the tenth century, affirms that during one hundred and fifty years the church was governed by nearly fifty popes, whose crimes were so flagrant, that each one rather deserved the title of *apostate*, than apostolic! Again, Benedict the Ninth, Sylvester the Third, Gregory the Twelfth, and Alexander the Fifth, were deposed for their abominable practices; also, the infamous Borgia, Alexander the Sixth, whose character has been portrayed with consummate ability by the prince of modern novelists.

At the commencement of the ninth century, the Saxons having embraced Christianity after their subjection by Charlemagne, several learned Englishmen passed into Germany to instruct the new converts. Among the number was a priest, accompanied by his wife, whom, it is said, he had clandestinely carried away, and during their stay at Mayence she brought into the world a child, whose name was destined to become celebrated in after years, and whose very existence was to be the subject of contention during successive ages.

This infant, to whom the names of Joan, Agnes, Jutta,

and Gilberta, have been indiscriminately applied, was exceedingly beautiful. Her father, observing an intelligence rarely found in children of a tender age, sedulously cultivated her understanding, and was gratified by perceiving that her progress exceeded his fondest expectations. At the age of twelve years, her charms of mind and person attracted the passionate admiration of a young monk in the Abbey of Fulda, likewise of English origin, who, discovering a reciprocity of feeling in the maiden, and being aware that the rules of his order precluded any hope of being united to her in marriage, persuaded Joan to quit the parental roof, and follow his fortunes. For this purpose, disguising herself in boy's attire, she adopted the name John, to which she afterwards added the surname of "the Englishman."

To avoid discovery, for she had been closely pursued, and to enjoy the society of her lover, Joan entered the Abbey of Fulda as an acolyte; but a month afterwards she left the monastery, and proceeded with her companion to England, where, having congenial tastes, they applied themselves with great assiduity to a severe course of study, and the monk, who had already acquired considerable renown for the extent of his mental abilities, speedily attained an eminent position in literature.

A difference of opinion exists with regard to his subsequent career. Boccaccio and Fillippo da Bergamo state that he died in England, and that Joan, who still retained her man's attire, speedily eclipsed all her fellow-students by her remarkable acquirements. Other writers affirm that she travelled for some time in Greece and Italy, accompanied by her lover, whom one writer terms her husband. Egnatius says that several degrees were conferred upon her at Paris, and that she afterwards

proceeded to Athens. His testimony is likewise confirmed by other writers.

This city of Greece, so celebrated in antiquity, however fallen from its former splendor, still possessed its schools, academies, and university, presided over by experienced professors. Joan remained there some years, devoting herself with ardor to learned pursuits, frequenting the public lectures, and arguing with the most subtle doctors upon difficult and abstruse points of philosophy. By dint of this severe application, she became proficient in every branch of literature, the arts and sciences, profane history, and particularly theology; and to these gifts was added an eloquence so persuasive, that, according to Egnatius, "all those who disputed, or conversed with her, admired the graceful readiness and divinity of her understanding." It may, therefore, readily be imagined that, with such surpassing talents, this female Crichton carried off the honors from all the learned men who were then at Athens, and with one consent she was declared the brightest ornament of the university.

Her husband (according to some accounts) dying at Athens, Joan determined to leave that city, and establish her residence elsewhere. The fame of the capital of the Christian world induced her to visit Rome. The fact that Italy afforded greater facilities than any other country for concealing her sex, for it was a general practice at that epoch throughout the papal dominions to shave the face entirely, may have been a strong inducement to her.

It was to restore the custom of wearing long beards that the celebrated Pierius Valerianus addressed a speech to Hypolite de Medicis, who was created a cardinal in 1529, in which it was expressly stated that the abolition of this usage had occasioned, in former years, the scandal of a female occupying the papal chair.

On being established in the Eternal City, Joan, who had taken the priestly vows before the altar of the Church of St. Martin, on the borders of Rome, commenced a series of public lectures, and taught in what was then termed the school of the Greeks, the principal place of learning at that time. Her duties were to explain the several liberal arts, and particularly rhetoric. Saint Augustine, who had formerly occupied the same chair of philosophy, had rendered this college illustrious, but Joan greatly augmented its reputation, and not satisfied with merely performing the task assigned to her, the indefatigable lecturer taught divers branches of science, in which she was profoundly versed. In the ordinary lessons, public disputations, and harangues, in which Joan was engaged, she displayed so much subtlety and discrimination that she acquired the reputation of being the ablest doctor of the day, and was styled the prince of erudition. Cardinals, priests, and professors of all grades and talent, as well as people of the highest rank considered it their greatest privilege to become her auditors and disciples. The simplicity of her manners, the modesty of her speech, her mode of life, her devotion and charitable actions, were worthy of all imitation, and were universally commended.

It is also affirmed, that on an invasion of the Saracens, at that time formidable enemies of Rome, Joan materially assisted in driving them from the Eternal City, not only by her sage counsels, but by her personal bravery, taking arms, and heading the populace in several sallies against their foes.

It is true that hypocrisy lurked behind all this assumed excellence of character, but rarely has such duplicity been sustained with equal success for so long a period. Joan deceived all the Christians in Rome, and won golden opinions from all; "Chacun fut tout affectionné envers

elle, et cette femme gagna le cœur de tous," says Du Haillan in his "History of France."

With so strong a public sentiment in her favor, and having acquired so much credit and authority, it is scarcely to be wondered at that Joan should aspire to the papal chair, vacated by the death of Pope Leo the Fourth. This event occurred in the year 853 or 854, and an interval of fifteen days elapsed before a successor was appointed by the sacred conclave. Joan being proposed as most worthy to sustain that high dignity, the cardinals, deacons, and priests, unanimously applauded the selection, and she was declared sovereign ruler of the Church of God, with the title of Pope John the Eighth.

This occurred in the forty-second year of her age. The Italian poet says: —

"For many nights upon the Vatican,
Screech owls were heard, and bats were seen to perch,
Before the time that John the Englishman,
Put on the triple mitre of the church.
Pope John the Eighth, his sacred title ran,
A parallel event defies research.
Grave history seems in fairy tales to dwindle,
When papacy thus falls beneath the spindle!"

Joan was accordingly anointed and duly installed pontiff, with all the ceremonies customary on the august occasion.*

* Platina, in his Life of Pope John the Eighth, says, "by acute and learned public lectures and disputations, she (Joan) had procured for herself so much credit, that on the death of Leo (according to Martinus) she was chosen pontiff by universal consent."

See also Chron. Epp. Verdentium Script. Brunser. tom. ii. p. 212. "She was well brought up in her youth, excellently grounded in liberal studies, and bearing the clerical character, she was from her great reputation in the city, chosen Pope." Stello, a Venetian priest (Vitæ, 230, Pont. Rom. papa. 108, an. 852), says, "she pro-

Learned as she was, it was impossible that Joan could be ignorant of the law that forbade females exercising the sacred functions of the ministry, but she unhesitatingly undertook the exalted office to which she was elected, and for some time displayed so much wisdom in the government of public affairs, such energy in suppressing old abuses, and founding institutions of a more liberal tendency, besides fulfilling the duties of her station with hospitality and simplicity, that she was universally beloved. As sovereign pontiff, according to Du Haillan, she conferred holy orders, made priests and deacons, ordained bishops and abbots, chanted mass, consecrated temples and altars, administered the sacrament, presented her feet to be kissed, and indeed performed all the functions of the office with rigid exactitude.

Immediately after her accession she is said to have launched a bull of excommunication at Anastagius, her rival, and against iconoclastics, and Fozio, a recusant, who denied the Divinity of our Saviour.

Neither were her studies forgotten. Joan composed several introductions to masses which were, however, afterwards destroyed, when her sex became known. She is also said to have written a work on Necromancy, which gave rise to the charge of witchcraft, brought against her by "le bon, le docte, le sage, le tout humain, tout debon-

fited so much in her studies, by the masters she had at Athens, that when she came to Rome, there were very few equal to her even in sacred literature; and there, by giving lectures and disputations, by teaching and preaching, she acquired the love and good graces of every one, to that degree, that, on Leo's death, as many writers affirm, she was chosen by universal consent to succeed him as Pope." In Gio, Nauclero, Chron. Coloniæ, 1579, we read, "coming then to Rome, she gave public lectures, and had a great many public men for her scholars and hearers. And she obtained so much approbation, that, on Leo's death, she was created pope in his place."

naire et equitable André Tiragneou," as he is addresssed by his more celebrated and eccentric friend Rabelais, and a belief afterwards prevailed that Joan, to attain the papacy, had sold herself to the devil.*

It was during this pontificate that the Saxon King of Wessex, Ethelwolf, with his son Alfred, afterwards the champion of his country, made a journey to Rome, laden with treasures for the pope. The Italian poet, from whom we have already quoted, thus alludes to this incident: —

"King Ethelwolf was credulous, devout,
Most docile, charitable, — not too sage, —
And therefore with humility set out
To Rome, upon a holy pilgrimage!
A work so meritorious he, no doubt,
Thought would indulgences fourfold engage:
Besides, he had a lurking wish to view
A pope, who, like himself, was Briton too!"

It is further stated that the royal penitent on his return to England ordered the tax of Peter-pence † to be levied throughout Wessex to recruit the resources of the papal treasury, upon which large drafts had been made by some of the profligate predecessors of Joan.

* A poet of the country of Virgil, and superior of the Carmelites, represents Joan hanged at the gate of Hell with her paramour, so that the doomed as they go in may behold her.

† Peter-pence were paid on St. Peter's-day for alms to Rome, and for lighting up the church in honor of the saint. Offa began this practice, and the yearly present was continued long afterwards.

Matthew of Westminster, Rodolfo di Diceto, Brompton, and Asserius, author of the Life of Alfred, relate this journey of Ethelwolf, and the tribute paid in the year 854.

The Chronicle of Nuremberg also speaks of this donation, the act of which was inserted in the Collection of Councils preserved by William of Malmesbury.

It was in this pontificate also, that the Emperor Lothaire, already old, having embraced the monastic life and retired to the Abbey of Prome, left the empire to his son Louis the second, who went to Rome, and received the sceptre and crown from the hands of Joan, with the papal benediction, and as some Protestant writers affirm, it was in favor of this same monarch that she accorded the privilege of the prescription of one hundred years, which is mentioned in the Gratian collection of decrees and councils.

At this epoch several earthquakes are reported to have taken place.

"In the year 856" (during the pontificate of Joan), says Petrarch, "there was a miraculous rain of blood in the city of Brixia, and in France were seen monstrous locusts, having six wings, six feet, and teeth exceedingly strong, which flew in the air in a marvellous manner. They were afterwards all drowned in the English seas, but their bodies were cast on shore, infecting the air so strongly, that most of the inhabitants in the neighborhood died in those parts."

But to return from these notices of contemporaneous history, to the declining fortunes of this remarkable woman, who, for a time, claimed spiritual dominion over the world. While she remained in poverty, devoted to study, Joan had conducted herself in a simple and becoming manner, and at the commencement of her elevation did not abandon the austere habits and unostentatious piety which she had successfully assumed to secure the good-will of all. Riches, idleness, and luxury, however, which had long influenced the court of Rome, were not without their effects on the new pontiff. All her former associations were cast aside, and Joan yielded to the temptations which surrounded her with an ardor increased

by the previous restraint imposed upon passions which a spark alone could enkindle. She became addicted to good living and intemperance. Every opportunity was afforded for the indulgence of her criminal instincts, and at length she selected a favorite to whom she confided the secret of her sex. By different writers he is represented as a domestic, *valet de chambre*, counsellor, chaplain, and, according to Du Haillan, a cardinal.

Joan's frailty could not long remain concealed. An old manuscript relates that one day, when she was presiding in the consistory, a person possessed by an evil spirit was brought before her to be exorcised. Among other questions, Joan having demanded of the demon upon what terms it would quit the body of the sufferer, — "I will tell you," replied the spirit; "I will leave when you, who are pope and the father of men, shall see a child born from a female pontiff."

Rogation-day having arrived, when special masses were accustomed to be said and a solemn procession made through Rome, from the church of St. Peter to St. John Lateran, Joan, after the custom of the popes, mounted on a mule, clothed in her rich pontifical vestments and crowned with the tiara, set forward, preceded by the cross-bearer, and accompanied by a retinue of cardinals, clergy, troops, and a multitude of people. But on arriving near the church of St. Clement and the Coliseum, or amphitheatre of Domitian, she was suddenly surprised with the pains of labor, and in the presence of the vast assemblage brought forth a male child, who died immediately after seeing the light. The astonishment of the spectators, the scandal of the dignified fathers of the church, the trouble of devout believers, and the raillery of libertines, at an event so singular and unforseen, may be easily conceived. It was impossible for any human being to sustain so terri-

ble a reverse. The fear of chastisement from the hands of a furious and bigoted populace, the sense of shame at the discovery of her sex in so flagrant a manner, the corporeal suffering she endured for want of assistance, all these circumstances combined were too much for exhausted nature, and the mother followed her child through the gates of death.

In the surprise and anger of the moment it was expected that the bodies of both would be thrown into the Tiber. A feeling of pity prevailed, however, among the multitude, and they were allowed to be interred, though not in consecrated ground. The scene of this strange occurrence was selected as the place of burial for the defunct pope and her offspring, and in that spot they were laid, without pomp or ceremony, and without any of the honors that usually accompanied the popes to their last home.

To preserve the memory of this event, a little chapel, or temple, was erected on the place where Joan expired; and it is affirmed that some remains of this structure were still to be seen at the end of the fifteenth century, and that a marble statue then stood in the same spot, representing a female pontiff holding a child in her arms.

At a council of the fathers, it was ordained that, in future, the popes should not pass through the street where the scandal occurred, and, in consequence of this decree, on all solemn processions, the *cortége* was directed to turn aside through several other streets and avoid, by a long *détour*, the unhallowed spot; while, to prevent a similar deceit being practised by any hardy adventurer, Benedict the Third, who succeeded Joan on the papal throne, ordered that a test should be applied on the election of all future pontiffs. This custom prevailed until the fourteenth century. Urban the Sixth was installed in the throne of St. Peter with the required formalities, according to the

rites of the Roman church. Alexander the Sixth, although he had children (one of whom was the infamous Lucretia Borgia), was nevertheless compelled to submit to the same ordeal. The solemnities observed on this particular occasion are eloquently described by Bernardino Corio.

There are different opinions with regard to the length of time Joan exercised the spiritual dominion of the Roman Catholic world, though most authors agree that her government lasted two years, five months, and some days, and that she was forty-four years of age at the time of her decease.

JOAN OF ARC.

JOAN OF ARC;

THE WOMAN WARRIOR.

All nations have in their annals some of those miracles of patriotism in which a woman is the instrument in the hand of God. When every thing is desperate in the cause of a people, we need not yet despair, if the spirit of resistance still subsists in the heart of a woman, whether she be a Judith, a Clelia, or a Joan of Arc, — a Cava in Spain, a Victoria Colonna in Italy, a Charlotte Corday in France. God forbid that they should be compared with each other. Judith and Charlotte Corday sacrificed themselves, but they sacrificed themselves even unto crime. Their inspiration was heroic, but it made a wrong choice of weapons — it took the knife of the assassin in place of the sword of the hero. Their devotion became celebrated; but it bore a stain, and was therefore justly blamed. Joan of Arc wielded only the sword of her country, and in her time, accordingly, she was regarded not only as inspired with patriotism, but as the prophetess of God.

It was in the year 1429, and France was crumbling into pieces before it had become coherent. There was then residing at Domrémy, a village in Upper Loraine, on the frontier of Champagne, on the wooded slopes of the Vosges, not far from the little town of Vaucouleurs,

a family named D'Arc. The father of the family was called Jacques d'Arc, the mother Isabelle Romée, a name given in that part of the country to pilgrims who had been to Rome to visit the tombs of the martyrs. They had three children; two sons, Jacques and Peter, and an only daughter, born some time after her brothers, and bearing the name of Joan.

One of those popular prophets, who spread in all directions dark sayings of the future, in the certainty that they will be seized upon by the credulity natural to an age of ignorance, the enchanter Merlin, had written that the calamities of the kingdom would arise from a vicious woman, and that deliverance would come at the hands of a young and chaste girl. This rumor stirred the imagination of the people in the provinces, and might well excite in the mind of every maiden the involuntary hope of realizing the prophecy in herself.

The pensive and retiring beauty of Joan, while it attracted the attention of men, repelled familiarity. Several, nevertheless, pleased with her grace and modesty, solicited her hand from her parents. She persevered in remaining single and free, possibly through some obscure presentiment which warned her that she would one day have to give birth, not to a family, but a kingdom. One of the suitors, more violent, had the boldness to claim her love as of right, swearing before a court of justice that she was betrothed to him. The poor girl, abashed but indignant, appeared before the judges at Toul, and contradicted by oath this calumny of passion. The judges saw through the plot, and sent her home free.

While her beauty thus charmed the eye, the composure of her face, the thoughtfulness of her features, the solitude and silence of her life, astonished her father, her mother, and her brothers. She possessed only the grace

and attractions of her sex; she had none of its weakness. Her face exhibited neither her feelings nor the emotions of her heart. Its expression, concentrated in her eyes, seemed rather that of meditation than of feeling, yet she was compassionate and tender; but her pity and tenderness extended to something greater and more distant than her immediate horizon.

It was her habit to retire alone, and ply her needle in a secluded nook, under a hedge behind the house, from which she could only see the blue sky, the tower of the church, and the distant crest of the mountains. She seemed to hear voices within her which the noise of the world would have stilled.

She was scarcely eight years of age when these signs of inspiration began to appear in her. In this she resembled the Sybils of old, marked from their infancy with the fatal seal of sadness, beauty, and solitude, among the daughters of men — instruments of inspiration reserved for oracles, and to whom every other employment of mind was prohibited. She loved everything that suffered, particularly animals — those intelligent beings gifted with love for us, but deprived of words to convey their feelings. Her companions say that she was mild and merciful to birds. She considered them as creatures condemned by God to live near men, in a state of transition between soul and matter, and having in their nature nothing as yet complete but the painful faculties of suffering and love. All that was melancholy and indefinite in the sounds of nature attracted and absorbed her. "She was so fond of the sound of bells," says the old Chronicler, "that she promised the ringer hanks of wool for the autumn gathering if he would sound the Angelus longer in the mornings."

But her pity was most strongly excited for the kingdom

of France and for the young dauphin — motherless, without a country, and without a throne. The tales she daily heard from monks, soldiers, pilgrims, and beggars, the cottage newsmen of the time, filled her heart with compassion for the young prince. His image was associated in her mind with the calamities of her fatherland. It was in him that she saw it perish, it was through him that she prayed to God for its deliverance. Her spirit was ceaselessly occupied with this anxiety and sadness. Is it matter of wonder that such concentration of thought in a poor, simple, and untutored girl, should at length have effected a real change of feeling in her, and that she should have heard sounding in her ears the voices from within that were always speaking in her soul?

She heard these voices long without mentioning them even to her mother. A dizziness in her eyes announced their coming, with a burst of pleasing light which she supposed to descend from heaven. The voices sometimes whispered to her wisdom, piety, and virtue; sometimes they recounted to her the woes of France, and the groans of its afflicted people. Once, at midday, when she was alone in the garden, under the shade of the church wall, she distinctly heard a deep voice calling her by name, and saying, "Arise, Joan! go and help the dauphin, and give him back his kingdom of France."

The vision was so heavenly, the voice so distinct, and the order so imperative, that she fell on her knees and excused herself, saying, "How should I do this, seeing that I am but a poor girl, who can neither back a horse, nor lead the men-at-arms?"

The voice was not content with these excuses: "Go," it said to Joan, "and find the Lord of Baudricourt, captain for the king, at Vaucouleurs. He will guide you to

the dauphin. Fear nothing; St. Catharine and St. Margaret will help you."

This first vision, which made her tremble and weep with anguish, but which she kept as a secret between herself and the angels, was succeeded by others. She saw St. Michael armed with his lance, surrounded with rays, the conqueror of demons, such as he is painted on the altar-piece of his chapel. The archangel described the ruin and slavery of the monarchy, and commanded her to take compassion on her country. St. Margaret and St. Catharine, holy and popular saints in those districts, appeared to her in the clouds, according to promise. They spoke to her with the voices of women, calmed and softened by eternal bliss. They had crowns on their heads; angels as bright as gods escorted them. It was the beautiful vision of paradise that burst upon her view. Her soul, in these divine interviews, forgot the severe nature of her mission, and indulged in this delightful contemplation. When these voices were silent, the figures retired, and the sky closed, Joan of Arc was alone and weeping: "Oh! that those angels had taken me with them!" But such was not the object of her terrible mission. It was only upon the flames which rose from the pile of her martyrdom that she could reach the haven of her hopes.

These angelic conversations and calls, these hesitations and delays, lasted several years. She at length confessed them to her mother. Her father and brothers were informed of them, and the report went abroad in the country — a subject of wonder for the simple, of doubt for the wise, of satire for the evil-disposed, and of conversation for all.

Her father, an aged and austere man, heard with regret these rumors of visions and wonders under his peasant

roof. He did not think his family worthy of these dangerous favors from Heaven, or of these visits of angels and saints. All dealings with spirits he suspected, the more so as it was a time when popular superstition attributed so much to evil influences, and when the exorcist and the executioner punished with fire all traffic with the invisible world. He attributed his daughter's melancholy and her mental illusions to disordered health. He wished to see her married, that the love of a husband and children might satisfy her heart, and that the occupations of the mother might dispel these imaginations of the child. He sometimes carried his incredulity even to harshness, and told his daughter that, "if he heard that she gave credit to her pretended conversations with the spirits that tempted her, or meddled with the soldiers, he would rather have her drowned by her brothers, or would even destroy her with his own hands."

The displeasure of her mother, and even the threats of her father, stopped neither the visions nor the voices. Obedient in all other respects, Joan wished to obey even in this; but the inspiration was stronger than her will. Heaven must be obeyed before man, and the prodigy was to her more imperative than the call of natural duty. But there was one relative, however, either more simple, more kind or naturally more enthusiastic than her father, in whom the poor girl found sympathy. This was her uncle, whose portrait and whose name should have been preserved by history as the first believer in the mission of his niece, and the first from whom her genius derived assistance.

To withdraw Joan from the persecution and reproaches of her father and of her brothers, her uncle took her home with him for some time under the pretence of nursing his bedridden wife. Joan made use of this short absence

from her parent's care to gratify the ruling desire of her heart. She begged her uncle to go to Vaucouleurs, a garrison town near Domrémy, and to apply for the aid of the Lord of Baudricourt, who commanded in the place, that she might accomplish her mission.

The uncle, induced by his niece, and additionally persuaded by his wife, yielded to their wishes. He went to Vaucouleurs, and delivered the message with which he had been charged. The warrior listened to the peasant with good-humored contempt. There seemed no other course, in fact, than to smile at the madness of a peasant girl of seventeen offering to accomplish for the dauphin and for the kingdom what thousands of knights, warriors, and politicians could not effect by dint of skill and arms. "The best thing you can do," said Baudricourt, as he dismissed the messenger of miracles, "is to send back your niece to her father with her ears well boxed."

The uncle returned, no doubt convinced by Baudricourt's incredulity, and determined to remove forever this illusion from the minds of the women. But Joan had such command over him, and the strength of her conviction made her so eloquent, that she soon re-established his faith, and even persuaded him to take her to Vaucouleurs, without the knowledge of her parents. She well knew that it was a decisive step, and that, once out of the village, she should never return to it. She confided the secret of her departure to a girl whom she tenderly loved, named Mangète, with whom she prayed, commending her to the care of God. She concealed her project from one to whom she was still more attached, named Haumette; "fearing," as she afterward said, "that she should be unable to overcome the pain of leaving her if she bade her adieu."

Clad in a red cloth gown, the usual dress of the peas-

ant girls of the district, Joan set off on foot with her uncle. Having reached Vaucouleurs, she was hospitably received by a charcoal-dealer's wife, a cousin of her mother. Baudricourt, overcome by the importunity of the uncle and the obstinacy of the niece, consented to receive her, not through credulity, but because he was tired of refusing. Having questioned her, Joan told him with a tone of modest firmness, which appeared to derive its authority, not from herself, but from the inspiration she had received from on high, "I come to you in the name of the Lord my God, in order that you may tell the dauphin to maintain his present position, and not to give battle to the enemy now, because God will assist him about mid-Lent. The kingdom," she added, "does not belong to him, but to God. Nevertheless, God destines the kingdom to him: in spite of his enemies, he shall be king, and I myself shall guide him to his coronation at Rheims."

Baudricourt dismissed her to gain time for reflection, fearing, no doubt, either to disbelieve or believe too much, at a period when public opinion might have blamed him as strongly for incredulity as for belief. He consulted the priest of Vaucouleurs, and they went in form to visit the peasant girl at the house of her cousin, the charcoal-dealer's wife. The priest, wishing to be prepared for anything, had put on his sacerdotal garments, as an armor against the tempting spirit. He exorcised Joan, in case she should be possessed by a demon, and commanded her to retire if she was in league with Satan. But the spirits which possessed her were only her piety and her genius. She bore the trial without giving scandal either to the priest or the warrior: they returned undecided.

The report of this visit of the governor and the priest to the charcoal-dealer's house astonished and excited the inhabitants of the little town. People of every rank, and

especially women, went there. Joan's mission had become a matter of belief with some, of remark with all. The rumor had become too general for Baudricourt to hush it up any longer. He was already accused of indifference or indolence. "Was it not betraying France and the dauphin to neglect such succor from Heaven?" Joan added her complaints to those of the populace, but seemed to lament less for herself than for France. Strengthening herself with the promise she had heard from on high, "Nevertheless," said she, "I must be taken to the dauphin before mid-Lent, even if I wear my legs down to my knees to get to him; for nobody in the world, neither kings nor dukes, nor princesses of Scotland, can recover the kingdom of France, and he has no aid except myself; although I should prefer," she added, sadly, "to be spinning by my mother's side, for I know that fighting is not my work; but I must go and do what is commanded me, for my Lord wills it so."

They asked her, "And who is your Lord?" She answered, "God!"

During this delay the dauphin himself had received intimation, by letter, of the extraordinary events at Domrémy. Some are of opinion that Baudricourt preferred to receive instructions from the dauphin, and his mother-in-law, Queen Yolande of Anjou, and that the dauphin, Queen Yolande, and the Duke of Lorraine, arranged with Baudricourt to take advantage for their party of this appearance of a young, beautiful, and pious girl, worthy to obtain the divine protection for the people, to raise the enthusiasm of the army, and to effect deliverance for the kingdom. There is nothing improbable in this opinion, and the policy of such a belief does not disprove its sincerity, in an age when courts and camps shared in all that was believed by the people. The preparations for Joan's

journey and for her reception at court, and the respect paid to her upon her arrival, by the dauphin and Queen Yolande, sufficiently prove that the wonder was expected, and that there was a desire to heighten its effect.

The townspeople of Vaucouleurs bought her a horse of the value of sixteen francs, and a military dress, as well to protect her person as to denote her warlike mission. Baudricourt gave her a sword. The report of her departure for the army having reached Domrémy, her father, mother, and brothers came to persuade her to return. She wept with them, but her resolution remained unshaken.

Accompanied by two knights and some mounted servants, she started for Chinon, where the dauphin resided. Her escort conducted her rapidly through the provinces held by the English and Burgundians. Undecided at first as to her true character, they alternately revered her as a saint and shunned her as a sorceress. Some of them even secretly deliberated, at one time, about getting rid of her on the road, by throwing her into a mountain torrent and attributing her disappearance to the agency of a demon. But her youth and beauty, innocence and holy candor, softened their hearts and disarmed their hands. Incredulous at starting, they arrived convinced.

The court was then at the castle of Chinon, near Tours. The Prophetess of Vaucouleurs was expected there with various feelings. The counsellors of highest reputation for wisdom endeavored to dissuade the dauphin from receiving and listening to a child, who, if she were not an instrument of the Prince of Darkness, was at least the preacher of her own delusions. Others, more credulous, urged him at any rate to consult this oracle. Queen Yolande and the ladies at court were proud that their deliverance was to arise from a woman. Easy of belief, with a tendency to deceive themselves as well as others, they felt that all

human means of recovering the king's cause were exhausted, and that something supernatural, either true or supposed, could alone restore enthusiasm or hope to the soldiers and the people.

The dauphin, wavering, with the natural uncertainty of youth, between love and glory, and between grave counsel and female influence, was in one of those critical periods of moral weakness in which a man is inclined to believe every thing, because there is nothing more to expect.

Such were the circumstances under which Joan arrived at Chinon, and took up her quarters at the castle of the Lord de Gaucourt. The dauphin having at last consented to receive her, the humble peasant girl of Domrémy was ushered into the presence of the assembled warriors, counsellors, courtiers, and queens. The dauphin, dressed with extreme plainness, and surrounded by knights in rich armor, purposely furnished her with no clew to discover which among them was her sovereign. "If God really inspires her," said he, "He will lead her to the only one in whose veins the blood royal flows; if a demon, he will conduct her to the handsomest of my warriors."

Joan advanced, dazzled, and apparently with hesitation, into this crowd, timidly seeking with her eyes the only one among them all to whom she had a message. She recognized him, and turning modestly, but without hesitation, toward him, fell on her knees before the young king. "I am not the king," said the prince. "By my God, noble prince, you, and no one else, are the king," replied Joan. Then, with a louder and more solemn voice, she added, "Most noble lord and dauphin, the King of Heaven informs you, through me, that you shall be anointed and crowned, in the town of Rheims, as His lieutenant in the kingdom of France."

The grace and dignity of her demeanor, the favor of the

princesses, the pressing request of the messengers from the army at Orléans,—popular rumor, always more ready to believe what is miraculous than what is possible,—the adventure of an unbelieving man-at-arms, who, having insulted Joan upon a bridge, was soon afterward drowned in the Loire,—and lastly, the policy which either simulated or augmented a belief favorable to its designs,—every thing contributed to surround the young stranger with a halo of respect and hope which caused the slightest doubt to appear almost impiety. . . .

The Bastard of Orléans, the famous Dunois, was continually sending messages to her to come to Orleans to renew the courage of his soldiery. The Duke of Alençon, a chivalrous and courteous prince, came to see the prodigy, and embraced her cause with the fervor and enthusiasm of youth. Courtiers thronged around her at the castle of Coudray. Some gave her war-horses, others taught her how to keep her saddle, to manage her charger, and to break a lance; all were delighted with her boldness, grace, and dexterity, in warlike exercises.

The dauphin still hesitated, being restrained by his chancellor, who feared the ridicule of the English in case France were to confide her sword to a hand that had only wielded the distaff, and the clergy, who might, perhaps, attribute the assumed inspiration to witchcraft, and disapprove a belief which they had not authorized. He decided, at last, to send her to Poitiers, to be examined by the University and the Parliament. Those two oracles of the time, driven out of Paris, were then sitting in that province.

"I see clearly," said Joan, "that I shall be severely tried at Poitiers, where they are taking me; but God will assist me, so I shall go there with confidence."

Questioned kindly, but scrupulously by the doctors, she astonished them all by her self-reliance, as much as by her

patience and gentleness. One of them said, "But, if God be resolved to save France, He will have no need of men-at-arms." "Ah!" she answered, "the men-at-arms will fight, and God will give them the victory."

Another said to her, "If you give no other proof of the truth of your words, the king will intrust to you no soldiers to lead into danger." "By my God," said Joan, "it was not to Poitiers that I was sent to exhibit signs; but take me to Orléans, with as few men as you like, and I will give you some. The sign that I have to show is to raise the siege of Orléans."

At length, the bishops declared that nothing was impossible before God, and that the Bible was full of mysteries and examples which might authorize an humble woman to fight in man's apparel for the deliverance of her country. Queen Yolande of Sicily, the dauphin's mother-in-law, and the most respected ladies of the court, attested the purity and chastity of the prophetess. There was no longer any hesitation to trust her with the army, which, under the command of D'Alençon, her most zealous believer, was marching to the relief of Orléans.

Some light armor was forged for her, the whiteness of which denoted the purity of the heroine. She claimed a long rusty sword, marked with five crosses, which she said was buried in the chapel of a church near Chinon, and which was accordingly found there. She also received a white standard covered with fleurs-de-lis, the heraldic bearing of France. She then started on her journey, followed by an old and valiant knight, her protector Daulon, by two young children, her pages, by two heralds, a chaplain, a number of servants, and a crowd of people who blessed beforehand the miracle and deliverance she was to effect.

She was received triumphantly at Blois by the chiefs of

the army, who had collected to see her and to receive her divine inspirations — the Maréchal de Boussac, Lahire, Saintrailles, all warned by the chancellor to respect, in her, the mission of God and the will of the king. But the enthusiastic fanaticism of the people for the warrior maid of Domrémy produced more effect on the army than even the orders of the dauphin. Serving God as well as the crown, she began by reforming the disorderly habits of the camp. Cards, dice, and all the implements of witchcraft and gambling, both in tent and city, were burned. Popular preachers followed her steps, and declaimed in praise of women and of war. One of them, the friar Richard, a monk of the Franciscan order, drew such multitudes after him, that thousands of men and children slept on the bare ground around his pulpit the night before he was to preach. The breath of the spirit blew like a tempest on the souls of men. Joan humbly followed the preachers on foot, in the town of Blois; but her very humility marked her out for the homage of the multitude. Everything was already prepared for miracles, both in the course of events and in the minds of men.

The army, purified by the reformation and discipline which Joan introduced, was recruited by numerous companies of men-at-arms, hastening from all the provinces on hearing the wonderful reports. The standard of the maiden of Domrémy was indeed the Oriflamme of France.

The chiefs, hastening to profit by this enthusiasm, set their troops in motion. Joan desired them, regardless of the number or disposition of the English army, to march straight on Orléans by the shortest road, that of the Beauce. The generals pretended to agree with her, but took her across the Loire, in order that the river might protect their advance through the woods and marshes of the Sologne. Joan's chaplain marched at the head of the

army, bearing her banner, and chanting hymns. The march resembled a procession, in which the priest leads the soldiery. They arrived before Orléans on the third day.

Dunois, who was commander-in-chief both of the relieving force and of the garrison of Orléans, jumped into a light boat when he saw the maid from the top of the ramparts. When he landed at her horse's feet, "Are you," said she, "the Bastard of Orléans?" "I am," replied Dunois, "and am very glad you are come." She answered with the voice of gentle reproof, "Then it was you who recommended the army to take the road of the Sologne away from the enemy?" "It was the advice of the wisest and oldest captains," said Dunois. "The counsel of God, my Lord," said Joan, "is better than yours. You thought to deceive me, but you have deceived yourself. Fear nothing; God makes my road, and it was for this that I was born. I bring you the best help that ever knight or city received — the assistance of Heaven."

At this moment the wind, which was driving the waves of the Loire against the course of the current, and prevented the boats laden with arms and provisions from landing at the port of Orléans, suddenly changed, as if by a miracle, and the town was provisioned in spite of the English.

The next day, having dismissed the king's army, which was only to escort the convoy as far as the gates, and had to return to defend the low country, Joan entered Orléans at the head of two hundred lances, followed by Dunois and the brave Lahire. Mounted on a white jennet, raising her standard in her right hand, and clad in her light armor sparkling with a chastened light, she appeared to the townspeople and the soldiers to be the angel both of peace and war. She bade them lead her to the Cathedral,

where a *Te Deum* was sung as a thanksgiving for the relief of the town. But the succor which most comforted the people was the supernatural aid which they seemed to see and possess in the person of the prophetess. She was conducted from the Cathedral to the house of the woman of best reputation in town, in order that her honor might be protected from scandal, and that her good fame might remain unblemished amid the license of the camp. A feast had been prepared for her; but she only accepted a little bread and wine out of humility, and in remembrance of her father's frugal board.

She thence dictated a letter to the English, the terms of which she had considered during her journey. This letter resembled, in its style and manner, the summons which a Homeric hero might give to another before fighting, from the walls or on the battle-field. "King of England," she said, "and you, Duke of Bedford, calling yourself Regent of France; and you, William, earl of Suffolk; you, John Talbot, and you, Thomas Scales, styling yourself the lieutenant of the Duke of Bedford, obey the King of heaven, and give up the keys of the kingdom to the maiden sent by God! And you, archers and men-at-arms, who are before Orléans, go back, in the name of God, to your country! King of England, if you do not do this, I command the battle; and, wherever I reach you, this will I compel you to do. And know for certain that the King of heaven will send more strength to me than you can lead in your attacks." She then invited them to peace, and promised them safety and a good reception if they would come to treat with her at Orléans.

Laughter, ridicule, and sneering jibes were the only reply from the besiegers. They called her a jade and a cow-keeper. They dishonorably kept her herald a prisoner. She sent Talbot a second message, offering to meet

him in single combat under the ramparts of the town. "If I am conquered," she said to Talbot, "you may burn me at the stake; if I am victorious, you will raise the siege." Talbot only answered by a disdainful silence.

When summoned to be present at the council of war, out of respect to the wishes of the king and the superstition of the people, Joan showed the same eagerness to fight, and the same reliance on the divine aid she brought with her. Dunois pretended to give way to her in every thing, even contrary to his own opinion, knowing that by thus yielding he satisfied the people, and aroused the enthusiasm of the soldiery. The Bastard — a skilful leader as well as a brave soldier, — if he only half credited the revelations, believed entirely in the enthusiasm which they created.

The Knight of Gamaches, an old soldier, seeing the indulgence with which Dunois and Lahire regarded the maiden's rashness, was indignant that they preferred the revelations of a peasant girl to the advice of an experienced captain like himself. "Since the opinion," said he, "of a base-born adventurer is listened to in preference to the judgment of a knight like myself, I shall make no further opposition. My sword shall speak for me at a proper time and place, and I may perhaps lose my life; but my own honor, as well as obedience to my king, forbid me to sanction such absurdities. I strike my banner, and am now only a simple squire. I would rather serve under a nobleman than under a girl who was previously — I do not well know what." Then, folding his banner, he gave it to Dunois.

Every delay in the deliverance of the country by arms seemed to Joan to be doubting the divine promise, and a sin against faith. She rode off the next day to accompany a detachment which was going to Blois for reënforce-

ments; and on her return, leaped her horse on to the rampart of one of the fortifications which the English had thrown up around the town, and summoned them to evacuate their lines.

Two English knights, Granville and Gladesdale, — celebrated for their valor, and for the harm they had done to the besieged, — answered by insult and scorn, recommending her to mind her distaff and her flocks. "You lie!" said Joan; "you shall soon leave this place; many of your men will be killed, but you yourselves will not see it!" thus foretelling their defeat and death.

Dunois came to announce the speedy arrival of the English army which was coming up to complete the blockade. "Bastard, Bastard," said Joan, "I command you to let me know as soon as this army appears in the field; for if it shows itself without my giving it battle, I will have you beheaded," she added, jestingly. Dunois promised to give her the information.

A few days afterward, while she was lying on her bed at midday, fatigued with the labor she had undergone, a supernatural anxiety prevented her sleeping. Suddenly, sitting up in bed, she called her equerry, the old knight Daulon. "Arm me!" she said; "my heart tells me to go and fight with the English, but it does not say whether it is against their forts or their army."

While the knights were buckling on her armor, a great noise arose in the street, with a cry that the French were being slaughtered at the gates. "My God!" said Joan, "the blood of Frenchmen is streaming on the ground! Why was I not sooner awakened? My arms! my arms! My horse! my horse!" and without waiting for Daulon, who was still without his own armor, she rushed, half accoutred, from the house. Her little page was playing like a child on the threshold. "You false page!" said

she, "not to come and tell me that French blood was running! Quick! my horse!"

She sprung on her charger, and going to a high window, from which her standard was handed to her, she rode off at full gallop, following the noise, to the gate of the town. On the way she met one of her men returning, wounded and bleeding, from the wall. "Alas!" said she, "I never saw a Frenchman's blood without my hair standing on end."

It was the bastion of Saint Loup that the French knights had endeavored to surprise, and which Talbot had just relieved, driving the French before him to the ramparts of Orléans. Joan dashed out of the gates, rallied the fugitives, drove back Talbot, attacked the fort, slaughtered the English, took the garrison prisoners, and, passing at once from anger to pity, wept over the dead, and gave quarter to the conquered. Both prophetess and champion of her cause, the miracle of her wakefulness, of her intelligence, her strength and her mercy, raised her name far above all doubts in the French camp, and made her appearance the terror of the English.

Having resolved upon a decisive attack on their fortifications, she went to the top of the tower, and fastening to an arrow a letter in which she summoned them to surrender, and promised them mercy, she drew her bow, and shot the arrow into their camp. They remained deaf to this second summons, and sent back insulting replies by other arrows. She blushed on hearing them read, and could not even restrain her tears before her followers; but quickly comforted herself with the thought that God did her more justice than men. "Bah!" she said, drying her tears; "the Lord knows that they are only lies."

By the advice of Dunois, she ordered a sortie, and a general assault on the four English forts on the left bank

of the Loire. The attack was repulsed, and the French routed. Joan was looking on at the fight from an islet in the middle of the river, and, seeing the defeat, sprang into a light boat, and, towing her horse, landed in the midst of the confusion. Her presence, her voice, her standard — the divinity which the soldiers imagined they saw beaming from her fine face — rallied, turned, and induced them to follow her to the palisades; she took the forts, and set fire to them with her own hand. The ashes of the English ramparts, stained with the blood of their defenders, were the trophy of this victory. Joan returned triumphant, though wounded in the foot by an arrow.

Dunois and his lieutenants thought they had done enough in clearing one bank of the river. "No, no," said Joan; "you have been to your council, and I have been to mine; believe me, the advice of my King and Lord will prevail over yours. Be ready to-morrow with the army; I shall then have more work before me than I have done to-day. I shall lose blood — I shall be wounded."

In vain the captains closed the gates the next day to restrain her ardor. The people and the soldiers, mad with enthusiasm, mutinied, and threatened the generals. The gates were forced by the multitude, which poured like a torrent after the prophetess. The chiefs were obliged to follow the soldiers. Dunois, Gaucourt, Granville, Gouthant, De Raiz, Lahire, Saintrailles, rushed forward to the attack of the principal fort occupied by the English. The English army, surrounded by ramparts and ditches, mowed down these masses with its artillery. The ladders, felled by axes, were thrown back upon the assailants. The foot of the wall was heaped with the dead. The multitude became discouraged. Joan only persisted in her faith. She seized a ladder, and placing it against the wall of the bastion, ascended it sword in

hand. An arrow pierced her neck near the shoulder, and she rolled senseless into the ditch. The English, to whom the capture of Joan would have been worth a victory, came out of the intrenchments to seize her. Gamaches strode across the maid, and defended her with his axe. The French rallied at his shouts, and saved her. On coming to her senses, she saw Gamaches wounded, and a conqueror for her sake. "Ah," said she, repenting that she had once offended him; "take my horse, and without purchase. I was wrong to think ill of you, for never saw I a more generous cavalier." The arrow stuck out two handbreaths behind her shoulder, and she was covered with blood. She was compelled, like Clorinda, to submit the chaste beauty of her person to the eyes and hands of men. But the purity of her mind, and the sacredness of the blood spilled for her country, made her appear so holy, that no one, in beholding her, says Daulon, could conceive an idea of profanation.

Yet she was a woman, and a weak one, for she cried at seeing her blood flow. She afterwards drew out the arrow with her own hand, and said to the armed men, who recommended the superstitious remedies of enchantment and of witchcraft then used in the camp, "I would rather die than thus offend against the will of God." Her wound was dressed with oil, and she again mounted her horse to follow the crestfallen army and people in their retreat.

Her banner, however, remained in the ditch at the foot of the ladder where she had first fallen. Daulon, her knight, having perceived it, ran with some men-at-arms to regain it. Joan rode on after them. While Daulon was placing the standard in the hands of his mistress, its folds, shaken by the wind and by the motion of the horse, spread out in the sun, and appeared to the French as a signal

which she was making to recall them to her help. Already retreating, they rallied and advanced to the rescue. The English, who believed her to be killed, seeing her again on horseback leading the assailants, thought her either invulnerable or risen from the dead: they were panic-struck. The flash of the cannon through the white smoke of the powder seemed to them the tutelar angel of Orléans riding on the clouds, and fighting for Joan and her cause with the sword of God. A beam thrown across the ditch served for a bridge to a bold knight, who cleared a way to the ramparts for the French battalions. The English commander Gladesdale, giving way before this onslaught, was endeavoring to cross a second ditch to gain the bastion. "Surrender, Gladesdale!" said Joan; "you have disgracefully insulted me, but I will have pity on your life and on your men." At these words the drawbridge, on which the last remnant of the English was fighting desperately, gave way under the repeated blows of a ram, and the Loire received their bodies.

Joan returned to Orléans amid the ringing of bells, her armor covered with blood, proud of a victory which the army owed entirely to her, but humble, inasmuch as she acknowledged that she was indebted for it to God. The madness of the people almost deified her. She was at once their salvation, their glory, and their religion. Never did popular notions mingle heaven and earth with more effect in the figure of a virgin, a saint, and a hero. The English generals thought they saw the arm of God in the irresistible ascendency of this heroine. They burned the few fortresses they still possessed in the country, and retreated beyond the ramparts of Orléans.

The French knights and the people wished to take advantage of their discomfiture to attack and destroy them. "No," said Joan, with a gentle firmness; "do not kill

them. It is enough for us that they are gone." Then, causing an altar to be raised upon the ramparts of Orléans, high mass was performed, and hymns of victory sung while the enemy was marching away.

The deliverance of Orléans proved the deliverance of the kingdom. That town made a tutelar saint of its deliverer, and, not daring as yet to consecrate altars to her, it set up her statues in its squares.

But Joan wasted no time in vain triumphs. She brought back the victorious army to the dauphin, to assist him in reconquering city after city. The dauphin and the queens received her as the messenger of God, who had found and recovered the lost keys of the kingdom. "I have only another year," she remarked, with a sad presentiment; "I must therefore set to work at once."

She begged the dauphin to go and be crowned at Rheims, although that city and the intermediate provinces were still in the power of the Burgundians, Flemings, and English. The imprudence of this advice was apparent to the counsellors and generals about the court. The coronation of the king at Rheims appeared to them all an impossibility or a piece of rashness, which, for a vain shadow of power, would have compelled them to abandon the fruits of victory already won. They wished first to reconquer Normandy and the capital. Council followed council. Joan was tired of the idleness of the court; her inspirations urged her, and she urged the dauphin.

One day when he was closeted with a bishop and some counsellors, she came and tapped gently at the door of the council chamber. The king, recognizing her voice, allowed her to enter.

"Noble dauphin," said she, kneeling before him, "hold not such long councils; come at once and receive your

crown at Rheims. Voices from on high are urging me to lead you there."

"Joan," said the bishop, "how is your advice communicated to you?"

"Ay, Joan," said the king, "tell us how."

"Well," said she, "I knelt down to pray, and as I was lamenting over your not believing in my advice, I heard a voice which said to me, 'Go, go, my child; I will assist thee — go;' and when I hear this internal voice, I feel exceedingly rejoiced, and I could wish to hear it always."

The dauphin yielded, and gave the command of the army to the Duke of Alençon, who marched against the English under the command of the Earl of Suffolk. The number of enemies to be passed shook the confidence of the court and of the handful of soldiers who followed Joan. "Fear not to attack," said she, "for God is our leader. Were it not for that, should I not prefer watching my sheep to running into such danger?"

They followed her through Orléans, still full of her glory, and marched against Suffolk, who shut himself up in Jergeau. The assault was sanguinary. Joan, mounting the wall with her standard in her hand, was hurled into the moat by a large stone, which split her helmet. Her steel cap and long hair saved her. She crawled out of the ditch and took the town. Suffolk surrendered to one of her knights.

She was continually urging the army forward. "You are afraid, noble sir!" she said, smiling, to the Duke of Alençon, who was prudent as well as brave; "but fear nothing: I have promised to bring you back safe and sound to your wife."

They were looking for another English army, commanded by Talbot, in the Beauce. Separated from this force by a forest, Lahire, who led the van, did not know

what road to take. A stag, starting up before his horse, dashed into the English camp; the shouts which this nation of hunters could not restrain at sight of the game, exposed their position. The French army, thus miraculously led, attacked and defeated them. Their most dreaded chieftains, Talbot and Scales, surrendered, and were taken prisoners.

The Duke of Bedford, the regent, remained trembling in Paris. "All our misfortunes," he wrote to the Cardinal of Winchester, "are owing to a young witch, who, by her sorcery, has restored the courage of the French." The Duke of Burgundy, recalled from Flanders by Bedford, returned to support and defend Paris in conjunction with the English.

Joan, however, after this victory, returned to the dauphin. She had at length persuaded him to go to Rheims. Paris was turned by way of Auxerre, and she marched on Troyes, the capital of Champagne. The town surrendered at the summons of the deliverer of Orléans.

Châlons and Rheims successively opened their gates. The king was crowned, and Joan's mission was accomplished. "Noble king," said she, embracing his knees in the Cathedral, after the coronation, "now is accomplished the will of God, which commanded me to bring you to this city of Rheims to receive your holy unction — now that you at last are king, and that the kingdom of France is yours."

She was the visible palladium of the people, of which the king was only the sovereign. Women brought their little children to touch her, as if she had been a holy relic. The soldiers kissed her standard, kneeling, and blessed their swords by touching them with hers. She modestly and devoutly strove to avoid this superstitious adoration of the multitude, arrogating no superhuman virtue to her-

self, and attributing all her success to her obedience to the orders she had received from the inspiration of God. "Oh!" she exclaimed, beholding the joy of the king restored to his people, and of the people restored to their king, "why can I not die here?"

"Where do you then expect to die?" said the Archbishop of Rheims. "I know not," said the holy maiden; "I shall die where it pleases God. I have done what the Lord my God has commanded me; and I wish that he would now send me to keep my sheep, with my mother and sister."

She was beginning to experience that vague fear of the future which seizes heroism, genius, and even virtue, when they have finished the first half of every great human work, their rise and triumph, and when there only remains the second, their fall and martyrdom. She already began to hear the voices, no longer of heaven, but of home, by which man, tired of ambition and glory, is recalled to the scenes of his first affections, the humble occupations of his youth, and the obscurity of his early days.

Poor Joan! why did she not listen to those voices? God had determined that her cup should be full, and it could be filled only by the wickedness of man, and her own martyrdom.

Such was the state of Joan of Arc's mind after the coronation of Charles the Seventh at Rheims. From that moment a great depression and a fatal hesitation seem to have come over her. The king, the people, and the army, to whom she had given victory, wished her to remain always their prophetess, their guide, and their enduring miracle. But she was now only a weak woman, lost amid courts and camps, and she felt her weakness beneath

her armor. Her heart alone remained courageous, but had ceased to be inspired.

France, too, no longer required her. Its enemies at length felt that they were usurpers on the throne and foreigners in the country. The coronation of Rheims — that ordinance considered divine, which in those days introduced the hand of God and the holy unction to judge of the legitimacy of princes — had restored to the dauphin not only the love, but also the religious reverence of the nation. In defending their sovereign, the people now felt they were defending the anointed of heaven. Rebellion against him became blasphemy and impiety.

Discord, rivalry, and mutual recrimination had found their way into the councils of the English and the Burgundians. The Duke of Bedford, regent of France on behalf of Henry the Sixth, and the Cardinal of Winchester, who governed England during the infancy of the king, were busily employed in thwarting each other's plans. All the towns and provinces adjacent to Paris had surrendered to the forces of the King of France.

After some manœuvres of the French and English armies around Paris, to open and close the road respectively, the king advanced to St. Denis, and the Duke of Bedford immediately threw himself into the city, to defend it both from the attacks of Charles, and the fickleness of the citizens.

Joan urged the king to attack Paris. Mistaking her impatience for inspiration, and her own desire for an illumination from above, the generals still opposed it. She drew them against their will to the suburb of the Chapel of St. Denis, and fixed her quarters there with the vanguard, commanded by the Duke of Alençon, Marshals de Raiz and de Boussac, the Count of Vendôme, and the

Lord of Albes. The army was quartered in the villages to the north of the capital.

After a week of useless delay, Joan ordered an attack upon the ramparts from the top of that little hill which is now covered with streets, buildings and churches, and still retains the name of the "Butte des Moulins." With the Duke of Alençon and the generals, she cleared the first ditch under the fire of the town. Having reached the edge of the second, and being exposed almost alone to the missiles from the ramparts, she was sounding the depth of the water with her spear — and having the ditch filled up with fascines by the soldiery, still waving her standard and summoning the rebellious city to surrender — when an arrow pierced her leg, and she fell fainting on a heap of dead and wounded.

She was taken behind the bank that faced the ditch, where the shot and arrows passed clear above her head, stretched upon the grass and the arrow drawn from her wound. As soon as she recovered her senses, she cheered her party forward to the attack. In vain her brave knights besought her to allow them to carry her back to the camp, in vain the shot ploughed up the ground around her, and the dead heaped the ditches; — she insisted upon victory or death. It might have been supposed that she was leading the forlorn hope of her destiny. The Duke of Alençon, trembling lest he should lose with her the support and faith of his army, was obliged to come up himself, and have her borne away by his soldiers from the battle-field where she desired to die.

Under the cover of night, the king's generals withdrew their troops in silence. To conceal the extent of their losses, which the next morning would have exhibited to the Parisians, they carried off their dead from the edge of the ditch, and heaped them up, as if for a funeral pile, in

the barn belonging to the Ferme des Mathurins, and burned them in the night, that they might leave only their ashes to the English.

The army dispersed after the disastrous attack upon Paris, and a truce was concluded, to give time for negotiations of peace. Joan went to Normandy, to aid the Duke of Alençon in recovering his private possessions from the English. The Lord of Albret then requested her to join him in fighting at Bourges. She performed wonders at the siege of St. Pierre-le-Moûtier, and her inspiring genius returned to her amid the smoke of the attack. Abandoned by her troops, and left almost alone on the edge of the ditch, she still continued to resist. Her faithful esquire Daulon, shouted to her in vain, "What are you doing there, Joan? you are alone!" "No!" said she, pointing to the sky, "I have fifty thousand men." She continued to rally the discouraged soldiers, and shaming their cowardice by her valor, brought them back to the walls, and successfully headed them in escalading the ramparts.

On the resumption of hostilities between Charles the Seventh and the English, she brought the king an army under the walls of Paris. Finding negotiation fruitless, she told him now that she carried peace on the point of her lance. She dispersed several corps of Burgundians and English, and shut herself up in Compiègne to defend it, like Orléans, against the Duke of Burgundy. The fate of France was pledged, as if in the lists, against the fortune of the allied armies of England and Flanders.

A brave but ferocious warrior, William de Fleury, commanded in the town. Rumor accused him of entertaining either hatred or contempt for the heroine of the camp.

Joan had promised to save the place. In one of the first sallies made by the garrison, she fought with her usual bravery against the troops of Montgomery and Lux-

embourg. Twice repulsed, she twice restored victory to her banner. Toward the close of the day, the English and Burgundians united, and concentrating all their efforts upon the handful of knights who surrounded her, pursued her alone, as though she were the soul of their enemies, and the only cause of their own defeat.

Tracked and pursued amid her own troops, she sacrificed herself to save those who had trusted to her. While they were crossing the drawbridge to get back to Compiègne, she remained behind, exposed to the attack of the English, and fighting for the safety of all. At the moment when she was spurring her horse on the drawbridge to shelter herself behind the wall, the bridge rose and shut her out. Seized by her clothes and dragged from her horse, she rose to fight again; but, surrounded and disarmed by the increasing numbers of her enemies, she surrendered to Lionel, bastard of Vendôme, and was taken to the Lord of Luxembourg, the general of the Duke of Burgundy's forces.

No victory was so valuable to the English and Burgundians as this spoil which chance or treason had thrown in their way. Joan was, in their eyes, the saving genius of France and of Charles the Seventh. The cannon of the camp, and the *Te Deum* in the Cathedral, announced the capture of the Maid of Orleans in all the towns and provinces held by the allies. They thought they had conquered France in gaining possession of a girl.

The people, on the contrary, everywhere wept and lamented her fate. They spoke in whispers, both in camp and cottage, of the supposed treason of De Fleury, the commander of Compiègne, who, they believed, had sold the heroine of God to the Prince of Luxembourg. To support this accusation, which was without proof or probability,

they brought forward her presages and remarks on the eve of her last conflict.

"Alas, my good friends and my dear children," she had said to her hosts and pages, "I say it with sorrow, there is a man who has sold me. I am betrayed, and shall shortly be given up to death. Pray God for me, for I shall soon be unable to serve either my king or the noble realm of France."

The laws of war and of chivalry, — her sex, her age, her beauty, — the gentleness and humanity that she had always shown after victory, — the even scrupulous care she had taken never to shed blood in battle, — the purity of her manners, the childlike simplicity of her faith, — every thing ought to have assured the safety, mercy, and respect due to a warrior who surrendered, and to a woman who had become a marvel and a tale in the camp. It was an infamous crime for a knight to give up or sell to another the prisoners who had trusted to his mercy. Sir Lionel de Ligny, to whom Joan had surrendered, was answerable, both in honor and by custom, for the proper treatment of his prisoner. By the laws and usages of war, he could only exchange Joan for her ransom, if France thought fit to redeem her. But Ligny was a vassal of the Lord of Luxembourg, and it was his interest to flatter this noble, of whom he held his lands.

After having sent Joan as a prisoner to one of his own castles on the borders of Picardy, he gave her up to the Prince of Luxembourg. The Duke of Burgundy was already bargaining for her with Luxembourg; the English were treating with the Duke of Burgundy; and the Inquisition in Paris demanded her from them all, anxious to rid the earth of a victim whose patriotism was a crime in the eyes of this ally of the usurping powers. "Resting upon the rights of our holy office," the Vicar-General of

the Inquisition wrote to the agents of the Duke of Burgundy, "we require and insist, in the name of the faith, and under the appointed pains and penalties, that you send or bring to us, as a prisoner, Joan, suspected of crime, in order that proceedings may be taken against her by the Holy Inquisition."

Thus it was that Frenchmen demanded revenge for England, and the Church of France insisted on maltreating the liberator of her altars!

Luxembourg, though a stranger, was less cruel than the heroine's fellow-countrymen. He sent her to his castle of Beaurevoir, where the ladies of his family treated her with gentleness and compassion, but the University of Paris, scandalized at this mercy and delay, and in cowardly alliance with the Inquisition against innocence and misfortune, supported by more violent and imperative letters the requisitions of the Vicar-General. "Verily," said the University to the Prince of Luxembourg, "verily, in the judgment of every good Catholic, never within the memory of man has there been so great an injury to public faith, such immense peril and damage to the commonwealth of this kingdom, as will accrue from her escaping by such damnable means without proper punishment." As Luxembourg still resisted, the University and the Inquisition aroused the ecclesiastical authority in the person of Cauchon, bishop of Beauvais, a ferocious fanatic.

Cauchon, either from principle or from interest, had sold his very soul to the hostile cause. He even dared to require the Duke of Burgundy to give up his prisoner, and to settle her price with him. "Although this woman ought not," said his requisition, "to be treated as a prisoner of war, nevertheless, to reward those who have taken and kept her, the king (the English King of Paris) is willing to give them six thousand francs (then a consid-

erable sum), and to the Bastard who took her, a pension of three hundred livres." He moreover offered, by way of security, ten thousand francs, "as if for a king, a prince, a grandee, or a dauphin."

The Prince of Luxembourg, not daring to resist at the same time the secret desire of the Duke of Burgundy, — the power of the English in the coalition, — the University, the organ of public opinion, — the Inquisition, the organ of the Church, unwillingly yielded to this combined influence, and surrendered Joan. It was a complex crime, in which each party sought to avoid responsibility, but in which the accusation rests with Paris, the cowardice with Luxembourg, the sentence with the Inquisition, the blame and punishment with England, and the disgrace and ingratitude with France.

This bartering about Joan by her enemies, of whom the fiercest were her countrymen, had lasted six months. The hatred of her name among the English, and in the University and Inquisition, servile or interested partisans of the foreign dynasty, increased in proportion to the disasters which befell their cause. Policy required the popular prestige to be quenched in the blood of the heroine. The blindness of the clergy would have the sorcery burned with the witch; hate cried for vengeance; fear for security. The condemnation and death of Joan were the result of the tacit compact of these, the vilest passions of the human heart.

The Bishop of Beauvais pressed forward the trial, which was accordingly opened at his requisition. Such was the impatience for her condemnation among both the lay and clerical authorities, that the clergy of Beauvais authorized Cauchon to act in place of the Archbishop of Rouen, whose see was then vacant.

Above a hundred ecclesiastic and secular doctors had

assembled at Rouen to form the terrible tribunal. These hundred judges, however, were only authorized to take the informations against the accused, and to discuss the charges and evidence. The Bishop of Beauvais and the Vicar-General of the Inquisition alone had the right to decide, and they had already pronounced sentence in their hearts. The Bishop finally ordered the accused to be brought before him on the twenty-first of February. Persecuted by her enemies, she seemed to be forgotten by her friends. Charles the Seventh, victorious, and caring little for her to whom he owed his triumph, was already in treaty with the Duke of Burgundy, and does not appear to have made one serious effort to ransom the heroine who was about to die for his sake.

The bishop, fearing lest the prisoner might escape from the custody of the English, and be liberated by the people, carried on the trial in the castle of Rouen, commanded by Warwick, captain of the guards of King Henry the Sixth of England. It was in the chapel of this castle that Joan, in irons, but always clothed in the dress of a warrior, appeared before him. He spoke to the accused with kindness, assuming an appearance of impartiality or mercy, which afterward gave more weight to his decision. She at first complained of the weight and pressure of the iron rings which hurt her limbs. The bishop told her that these irons were a precaution which it had become necessary to take to defeat her repeated attempts to escape. The prisoner confessed that at the beginning of her confinement she had naturally desired to achieve liberty; but that there was nothing criminal or dishonorable in that, as she had never pledged herself not to leave the castle. The report of the trial does not state whether her irons were made lighter.

After this episode they read her indictment, which was

more religious than political, and in which she was charged with crimes against the faith, with heresy, and sorcery.

She stated her age to be about nineteen. With regard to her belief, she said that her mother had taught her the Lord's Prayer, the Ave Maria, and the Creed, the three prayers and profession of faith of all believers; and that no one but her mother had given her any religious instruction. She was called upon to repeat these two prayers and the confession of faith of her childhood; but she was apparently afraid, lest in reciting them aloud in the presence of the doctors she should make some omission or error, which might be turned against her as a proof of heresy; for she replied, "I will repeat them willingly enough, provided that my Lord Bishop of Beauvais, who is here present, consents to receive my confession."

She was taken back to her dungeon, staggering under the weight of her irons.

The next day she was called upon to swear that she would make true answers to all questions that might be put to her. She excepted those which related to God and the king, but not to herself. "On the latter," she said, "I will speak the whole truth, but not on the others."

She confessed that from the age of thirteen she had heard voices, and had been dazzled by luminous appearances in her mother's garden, on the side next the church; that these voices had only given her good advice; that they had perseveringly commanded her to come into France and raise the siege of Orléans; that she had resisted; but that, after long conflicts, she had persuaded her uncle to take her to Vaucouleurs, where Baudricourt had said to her, when sending her to Chinon, "Go, and may God's will be done!"

She related, without vanity and without fear, her pre-

sentation to the dauphin, and her instinctive recognition of him amid all his court. On being asked whether she had seen any divine mark or celestial sign on the forehead of the dauphin, she said, "Excuse my not answering any thing on this point." She then returned to her dungeon for the night.

The bishop, on opening the third sitting, admonished her again to speak the truth on all subjects respecting which she might be questioned, even if they concerned the state.

"My lord bishop," said she, "consider well that you are my judge, and that you take much on yourself in the sight of God if you press me too hard. I will tell nothing but the truth, but I will not tell the whole truth." She thus qualified her oath to diminish her danger.

The examination was resumed with the design of extracting a confession of sorcery from the maiden's simplicity. "You still hear your internal voice?" "Yes." "When did you last hear it?" "Yesterday, and again to-day." "What were you doing when the voice addressed you?" "I was sleeping, and it woke me." "Did you kneel down to answer it?" "No: I only thanked it for the consolation it afforded me, sitting upon my bed, and I begged it to comfort and to assist me in my distress." "Did it tell you that it would save you from the peril in which you now are?" "To that question I have no answer to give."

Numerous questions were then propounded to her in reference to her connection with the political affairs of the country, and especially as to the feelings she entertained towards the Burgundians and then she was dismissed for the day.

She appeared again on the 27th of February. Her sufferings were such that she even gave her judges some

anxiety. They returned to her visions, in order to infer sorcery from them. She related, with her customary candor, the visits of St. Michael, St. Margaret, and St. Catharine — names which she had given in her childhood to these unknown visitors of her soul. When they insisted on hearing from her all the inspirations which she received from these different spirits, "There are some visions," said she, sternly, "which were addressed to the King of France, and not to those who dare to ask for them." "Were these spirits naked when they visited you?" "Do you think," she replied, "that the King of heaven has no means of clothing them with his light?" "Will you tell us the sign you gave the dauphin to show him that you came from God?" "I have already told you that I will never reveal what concerns the king. Go and ask it of himself."

The following day they demanded of her whether her revelations had foretold that she should escape death. "That does not concern the trial," said she. "Would you have me, then, speak against myself? I put my trust in God, who will do as he pleases." "Did you not ask the queen for men's clothes when you were presented to her?" "That is true." "Were you never requested to take off your soldier's dress, and to wear women's clothes?" "Yes, certainly; and I have always answered that I should only change my clothes at the command of God. The daughter of the Lord of Luxembourg, who begged her father not to give me up to the English, desired me to do so, and so did the lady of Beaurevoir when I was in her castle. They offered to give me woman's clothes, or cloth to make them. I answered that I had not yet had God's permission, and that the time was not yet come. And if I had thought I could do it innocently, I would rather have done it for the sake of those

two good ladies than to please any ladies in France, except the queen."

In the course of the subsequent sittings, she was asked if there was not a magical sign on the ring she wore on her finger, and why she looked piously at this ring when going into battle. "It is because the name of Jesus," she said, "is engraved on it," and because also it was a pleasing remembrance of her father and mother, she liked to feel it in her hand and on her finger. "Why did you have your standard carried into the Cathedral of Rheims at the king's coronation?" "It had shared the trouble," answered Joan, her heart animated with this inanimate sign; "it was but fair that it should share the triumph!"

Tempted first through her simplicity, then through her patriotism, it still remained that she should be assailed through her conscience. The temptation on this point was sure to succeed. The University, the Inquisition, the Episcopal power, represented by the Bishop of Noyon, sided with the English crown, the Burgundians, and the Parisians. To refuse obedience to this party seemed to be refusing it to the Church. She was asked to recognize in everything the authority of this Church. She could not consent to abjure her political cause, nor could she refuse consent without declaring herself a rebel to the faith. "I refer it to my judge," said she, with that sublime inspiration of skill by which the judgment is elevated so as to confound human judges; and she would give no other reply than this, which she repeated seven times in the same words, in answer to all the craft of her accusers.

"Once for all," they at last impatiently said, "will you or will you not submit to the Pope?" "Take me to him," she replied, "and I will give him an answer."

During the rest of that day she remained silent.

Troubled in her conscience, she confessed her anguish in this prayer, which she addressed to Heaven to deliver her from temptation. "Most merciful God," said she, "I pray thee by the Passion, if thou lovest me, to reveal unto me what I should answer to this clergy. As concerns my life, I know well what to do; but as for the rest, I do not understand the commands of my guides." Her anguish, more terrible than the fetters of her dungeon and the presence of death, threw her into an illness which interrupted the public examinations.

During Passion-week, and on the festival of the Resurrection, when all Christendom was sharing in the agony of the Son of Man and rejoicing in their redemption, Joan felt more bitterly her solitude and her separation from the communion of souls. The sound of the merry Easter bells rang in her heart as a discordant mockery of her loneliness and sorrow.

In the meanwhile, the University of Paris, to whom her depositions had been referred, had declared her to be possessed of Satan, undutiful to her family, and drunk with the blood of the faithful. The lawyers, who were also consulted, had limited her guilt to the event of her persevering in her errors. The Inquisitor, and the Bishop of Beauvais himself, frightened at last by the clamor of the populace, which was now beginning to take pity on this innocent girl, seemed to become more merciful, and to appear content with her condemnation to repentance and imprisonment in place of death. They made a last effort to extract from their victim a disavowal of her obstinacy, thinking by this means to satisfy the people by their clemency, and the English by her punishment.

Joan was dragged, sick and weak as she was, from the pillar at the foot of which she had languished for four months, to undergo mental torture in public. Two scaf-

folds had been erected in the cemetery of St. Ouen, behind the royal abbey of that name. The Cardinal of Winchester, who represented the crown of England in France; Cauchon, the embodiment of servile ambition selling its country for rank; the judges, the clergy, the doctors, the assessors, the preachers of the University, the representatives of right submitting to might, were seated on one of these scaffolds.

Facing them on the other scaffold stood Joan, fettered and handcuffed, and chained to a stake, with an iron belt round her waist, surrounded by reporters ready to note her every word, and by the ministers of torture with their dreadful implements, prepared to force from her the cry of agony beyond endurance; within sight, the executioner with his hurdle, ready to remove her mutilated corpse.

Awed by these preparations, — hesitating between respect for the civil and religious power, fear of the foreigner, horror for the reputed witch, and pity for the maiden, whose beauty was touchingly enhanced by the shadow of death, — an immense and anxious crowd covered the square and the surrounding roofs. A celebrated preacher of the day, named William Erard, addressed Joan, and endeavored to persuade her into a disavowal of her errors, and a complete submission to whatever the Church might decide respecting the rights of the two competitors for the crown of France. "Alas! thou noble house of France!" he cried, thinking to strengthen his arguments by a stirring appeal to the line of Valois, "thou noble house of France, that wast ever the guardian of the faith, how hast thou been so perverted as to attach thyself to a heretical schismatic? Yes, it is of thee that I speak, Joan," said he, turning his withering glance upon her; "I tell thee that thy king is schismatic and a heretic!"

Joan had listened until then in silence to abuse which

only fell upon herself, but she could no longer restrain her feelings when she heard her dauphin insulted. "By my honor, sir," said she, interrupting the preacher, "I swear that he is the noblest Christian throughout all Christendom, and the one who best loves the faith of our holy Church, and that nothing of what you say is true." "Silence her!" exclaimed the Bishop of Beauvais. The officers ordered her to be quiet.

The bishop then read her a form of recantation, with which they pressed her to comply. "I will submit to the Pope," said Joan. "The Pope is too far off," answered the bishop. "Well, then, let her be burned!" shouted the preacher.

The officers, the executioners, and the people who surrounded her begged her to sign this declaration of submission to the Church — a simple expression of repentance for her faults before God, without any disavowal of her party or of her opinions before men. "Well, I will sign!" she said.

At these words a great shout of joy burst from the crowd. The Bishop of Beauvais asked Winchester what he was to do. "She must be admitted to repentance," said the Englishman. This was giving her her life. While Winchester's adherents were quarrelling with the Bishop of Beauvais on the platform, accusing him of favoring the prisoner, and while the bishop was angrily contradicting them, a secretary went up to Joan, and handed her a pen to sign the recantation, which she could not read. The poor girl blushed and smiled at her own ignorance, rolling her pen clumsily in those fingers that wielded the sword so easily. Under the officer's direction, she drew a circle, with a cross in the centre. They then read her reprieve, which inflicted on her imprisonment for

the remainder of her life, to repent of her sins on the bread of misery and water of affliction.

At these words the partisans of the English cause, and the soldiers, disappointed in their hope of revenge by a sentence which they thought cowardly from its not including her death, murmured and began to be excited; they crowded tumultuously round the tribunal, and picking up stones and bones from the burial-ground, threw them on the platform at the cardinal, the bishop, the judges, and the doctors, shouting, "You rascal priests! you are betraying the king!" But the judges, in order to escape the pelting, and to get safely through the crowd, told the most furious, "Keep quiet, keep quiet; we will have her another way!"

Joan was more astonished at the hatred of the people she had loved so much than at the prospect of death. She returned to the castle, pursued by the shout of the populace. She was compelled again to bear her fetters, and the sneers and insults of her enemies. Her female garments, which she had worn as a mark of obedience upon the scaffold, were taken away from her while she slept, and she was therefore obliged to resume her man's attire, which had been left by her bedside. As soon as she had been thus forced to put on the clothing which was considered the mark of her crime and obstinacy, the bishop was called. He berated her very severely for this relapse after her abjuration. She protested that she abjured nothing but her sins, and that she preferred death to remaining thus riveted to her dungeon pillar.

The Bishop of Beauvais, convinced of the desire of his party for the punishment of one whose existence called to mind the defeat of the English and the crimes of the Burgundians, ceased his contest with Warwick. He per-

suaded the judges and doctors of the necessity of punishing the unrepentant criminal with death. The ecclesiastics surrendered her to the secular arm, thus charged with all the odium of carrying into execution a sentence which they were content to dictate. That sentence condemned her to the stake!

A confessor, sent by the bishop, entered her cell, and announced her approaching doom. "Alas! alas!" said she, stretching her hands as far as her chains would allow, and throwing back her dishevelled hair, "must I be treated so horribly and cruelly? Must my pure and delicate body, which has never been soiled by any stain or corruption, be so soon burned and reduced to ashes? Ah! I would rather be beheaded seven times than burned! I appeal to God, the Supreme Judge, from the injustice and the tortures they inflict upon me!"

As a last favor, she was allowed to receive the communion of the dying in her dungeon. The bishop was in attendance with the officers of the prison at this the last consolation allowed her by her executioners. She saw him, and said, in a tone of gentle reproof, "Bishop, you are the cause of my death." She also recognized among the persons present a preacher from whom she had received spiritual advice before her trial, and with whom she had contracted the usual familiarity of the prisoner with the visitor: "Ah! Master Pierre," said she, weeping, "where shall I be this evening?"

They gave her back her woman's clothes, to be worn at the stake, to which she was driven in a cart between her confessor and an officer. A charitable monk followed her on foot, praying for her soul — a type of pity at the foot of the gallows. He was called Isambard: history should record the names of those whose love endures unto death. The wretch Loiseleur, employed by the bishop to worm

out Joan's secrets under the pretence of confession, ascended the cart before it moved off, to obtain from his victim forgiveness for his treachery. Even the English were aroused at the sight of this traitor, and hooted and threatened him — a versatility natural to a mob, which is willing enough to strike, but loathes treachery. "O Rouen! Rouen!" said she, weeping, "is it then here that I must die?" She wondered that Heaven suffered her to perish so young, before her work was done, and France completely freed from its oppressors.

The bishop, the inquisitor, the University, and the doctors were waiting for her on a stand placed opposite a platform of mortar, covered with dry wood, for this human sacrifice. When the cart stopped at the foot of the stand, the preacher said to her in the name of the judges, "Joan, depart in peace; the Church can no longer defend thee; it delivers thee to the secular arm:" a cruel excuse for those who had authorized the crime, and only made others the instruments of death.

Joan then knelt down in the cart, not to ask her life of the judges who condemned her, but to implore mercy from Heaven for the bishop and the priests who were about to burn her. She clasped her hands and bowed her head; and, addressing herself with a mild and pathetic energy, sometimes to her celestial protectors and sometimes to her destroyers, who were seated below her on the scaffold, she asked for their aid, their compassion, and their prayers with so tender a tone, that, at seeing such youth, innocence, and beauty about to be reduced to ashes, and at the sound of the wail which seemed already to be rising from her funeral pile, the doctors, the inquisitors, the officers, — even Winchester, and the Bishop of Beauvais himself, — burst into tears; and some of them, unable

to bear the sight, and faint with emotion, came down from the stand, and were lost amid the crowd.

The executioners compelled her to walk to the pile. Her confessor mounted it with her, murmuring pious advice in her ear. Her coolness did not abandon her in her despair. When the executioner, after fastening her to the pole, had set fire to the fagots at the bottom of the heap, "Oh, my God," she said, "go back, father; and when the flame rises round me, lift up the cross that I may see it as I die, and speak holy words to me to the last." Then, looking through her tears at the multitude thirsting for the blood of their deliverer, "O Rouen," said she, "I fear you will one day rue my death!" She then prayed with a low voice.

A deep silence had succeeded the roar of the tumultuous crowd. The dense mass of men listened to catch the last sob of her departing breath. A cry of horror and anguish was heard from the pile as the fire rose before the wind, and caught the clothes and hair of the condemned. "Water! water!" she cried, by a last instinctive effort; then, wrapped as in a garment by the sweeping flame, naught more was heard but some indistinct and broken sounds, half lost amid the crackling fagots, until her head, overtopped by the flame, fell upon her bosom, and with her dying voice she called upon the name of JESUS.

That voice was heard no more on earth, and of her body nothing was found but a few ashes. Winchester caused the embers of her pyre to be swept into the Seine, that there might remain upon the soil of France no vestige of the body, even, of the peasant girl who fought for its liberty.

He was mistaken. The Maid of Orléans was dead, but France was saved.

Such was the life of Joan of Arc, the prophetess, the heroine, the saint, the glory, the deliverance of France. The oppressed country breathed its spirit over the soul of the peasant girl; her passion for its freedom endowed her with the gift of miracles, a gift which nature never refuses to great and unselfish passions. Sprung from the people, drawn on by her devotion, accepted by policy, placed in the front rank as a champion by the chiefs and warriors of a ruined cause, deified by the populace, victorious over her enemies; abandoned by her king and her countrymen, as soon as her work was complete; hateful to the usurpers, sold by ambition, judged by cowards, condemned by her brethren, burned as a holocaust to strangers, she passed away in a sacrifice which appears to some an expiation for crime, to others an ascension to glory. Every thing in her life seems miraculous; and yet the miracle is not in her voice, her visions, her sign, her standard or her sword, but in herself. The strength of her national feeling was her surest inspiration. Her triumph attests the energy of this innate passion. Her mission was simply the bursting into action of patriotic faith. She lived in it, and died through it, and she was lighted to victory and to heaven by the flame of her enthusiasm as well as of her funeral pyre. Angel, maiden, warrior, martyr, she has become a fit blazon for the soldier's banner — a type of France commended to the people by beauty, and rescued by the sword; — her memory survived her martyrdom, and she was deified by the holy superstition of her country.

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